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AND THEIR CHILDREN

JOEL JAMES DUNN

LOREN CHARLES DUNN

CAROLYN DUNN NEWMAN

(AND ALL HIS DESCENDANTS)



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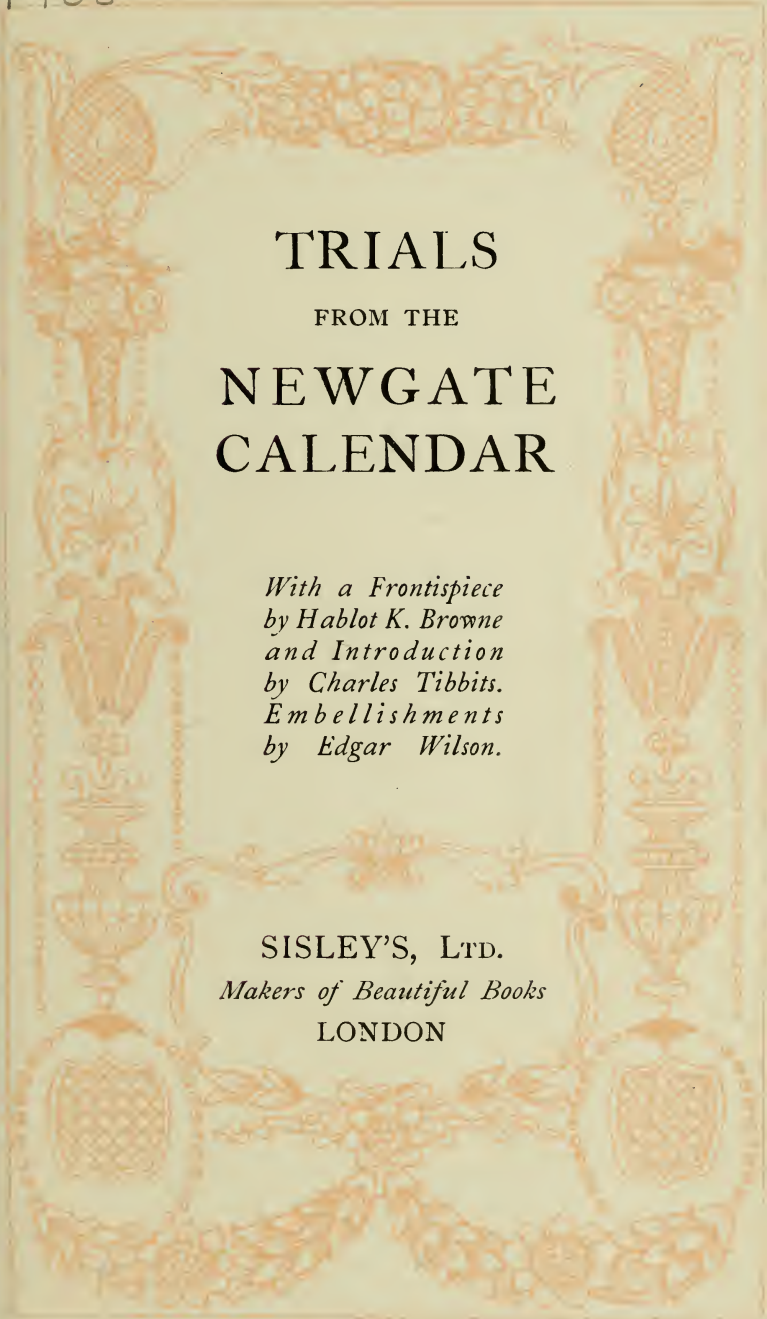


*From a Print]*

*[by Hablot K. Browne.*

LORD FERRERS SHOOTING HIS STEWARD

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TRIALS  
FROM THE  
NEWGATE  
CALENDAR

*With a Frontispiece  
by Hablot K. Browne  
and Introduction  
by Charles Tibbits.  
Embellishments  
by Edgar Wilson.*

SISLEY'S, LTD.  
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## INTRODUCTION

THE name of London's famous and terrible prison Newgate has for centuries conjured to the public mind the gloomiest picture that the imagination of the listener could conceive of human retribution on the criminal and depraved. What the name of the Bastille was in France to the person who might find himself at variance with political powers the name of Newgate was to the person who bore in himself the consciousness of crime. Its terrible reputation as the place of vengeance on offenders against the Laws seems to have a remarkable antiquity. When the prison was first instituted there is no record. As early as 1211 however we have the news of its dungeons being filled with offenders. In 1334 a commission was appointed by the authorities to consider the tortures then in use to extort confessions from the unfortunate wretches within its grim hold. From one end of the country to the other Newgate became known as a place where all the terrors of the Law awaited the guilty. Dipping into its gloomy annals one cannot help also arriving at the conviction that its terrors were not wholly reserved for the guilty. They overtook the unfortunate innocent sometimes. The inscription on the old Edinborough Tolbooth would excellently apply to it—even as it will apply to many of our prisons to-day.

A prison is a house of care,  
 A place where none can thrive.  
 A touchstone true to try a friend.  
 A grave for one alive.  
 Sometimes a place of right  
 Sometimes a place of wrong.  
 Sometimes a place of rogues and thieves,  
 And honest men among.

"You'll know Newgate" was centuries ago a warning saying uttered by persons who saw, or fancied they saw, in their acquaintances proclivities that promised badly with regard to their future careers. "He is a Newgate boy" was a description in which people indulged of mischievous urchins. Newgate was synonymous with "prison."

It is thus that we find in the Newgate Calendar the careers of people who never saw Newgate. The Newgate Calendar embraces descriptions of notorious offenders who found themselves in limbo in all parts of the country. Eugene Aram, for instance, was imprisoned, tried, and executed at York. The man or woman who simply got into prison somewhere for an offence which made him deemed worthy of record in the annals of crime was seized on by the compiler of the Calendar to adorn his pages.

As to when the first compilation of this extraordinary work, the Newgate Calendar, was first issued is not known. In the first place it was probably a collection of the catch-penny sheets that used to be hawked about among the crowds that flocked to an offender's execution, giving an account of his or her career. These were remarkably crude productions though they seem to have possessed a remarkable attraction for vast multitudes of the population. James Catnach, the most celebrated printer of such literary *morceaux*, claimed to have sold no fewer than 2,500,000 copies of his production.



about Rush, the atrocious miscreant responsible for the murder of the Stanfield Hall victims.

But the crudity and grotesqueness of such "true histories" as these limited their sale to the most vulgar. The careers of the notorious offenders were, it was felt, worthy of being dealt with by far more able pens, and in the volumes known by the name of the Newgate Calendar we have their stories related by writers who came to their subject with the zeal of responsible biographers. To the best of their ability—and the writers being generally of legal training they were possessed of some considerable ability both in sifting facts and in presenting them in a certain literary form, crude it may be, but vivid—they dealt with the criminal as a subject of interest to the more refined and educated classes. This volume includes a selection of such stories as possess special features either through the notoriety of the persons to whom they relate, the light they throw on the life of the period, or on the methods of the administration of justice at the time.

A celebrated barrister remarked to me once that the stories of the Newgate Calendar were to him in a literary manner what the pictures of Hogarth were in the pictorial. As far as one can compare a literary production to an artistic one I think the parallel good. The stories of the Newgate Calendar, perhaps, present the most vivid and accurate picture of the men, women, and the surroundings with which they deal, that is to be found in literature. Wonderful as is Fielding's Jonathan Wild we feel the Newgate Calendar description of that terrible offender that we are brought into an understanding of him, his associates, and of the conditions of Society that called them into existence and gave them nourishment, in a more realistic manner than all the genius of the novelist could effect.

These stories are as they were written. I am no way responsible for their literary shape. Now and again when the writer of them has intruded an opinion of his own I am altogether at difference with him. I should not myself be inclined to allude to Jack Sheppard as "our adventurer" or as "our hero." And I am not responsible for the estimates of guilt or innocence that one finds in the stories. I do not, for instance, believe that the guilt of Eugene Aram was in any sense proved, inclining with Lord Lytton to the belief that that miserable man fell a victim to erring Justice.

CHARLES TIBBITS.

# Trials

## from the Newgate Calendar

JOHN SHEPPARD

EXECUTED FOR HOUSE-BREAKING

THE prisoner whose name heads this article was a companion and fellow in crime to the notorious Blueskin. The name of Jack Sheppard is one which needs no introduction. His exploits are so notorious, that nothing more is necessary than to recount them. Sheppard was born in Spitalfields, in the year 1702; his father was a carpenter and bore the character of an honest man; but dying when his son was yet young, he, as well as a younger brother, Tom Sheppard, soon became remarkable for their disregard for honesty. Our hero was apprenticed to a carpenter in Wych-street, like his father, and during the first four years of his service he behaved with comparative respectability; but frequenting a public-house, called the Black Lion, in Drury Lane, he became acquainted with Blueskin, his subsequent companion in wickedness, and Wild, his betrayer, as well as with some women of abandoned character, who afterwards also became his coadjutors. His attentions were more particularly directed to one of them, named Elizabeth Lion, or Edgeworth Bess, as she was familiarly called from the town in which she was born. and while connected with her he fre-

quently committed robberies at the various houses in which he was employed as a workman. He was, however, also acquainted with a woman named Maggott, who persuaded him to commit his first robbery in the house of Mr Bains, a piece-broker, in White Horse Yard, Drury Lane. He was at this time still resident at his master's house; and having stolen a piece of fustian, he took it home to his trunk, and then returning to the house which he was robbing, he took the bars out of the cellar-window, entered, and stole goods and money to the amount of 22*l*, which he carried to Maggott. As Sheppard did not go home that night, nor on the following day, his master suspected that he had made bad connections, and searching his trunk found the piece of fustian that had been stolen; but Sheppard, hearing of this, broke open his master's house in the night, and carried off the fustian, lest it should be brought in evidence against him.

This matter received no further attention; but Sheppard's master seemed desirous still to favour him, and he remained some time longer in the family; but after associating himself with the worst of company, and frequently staying out the whole night, his master and he quarreled, and the headstrong youth totally absconded in the last year of his apprenticeship.

Jack now worked as a journeyman carpenter, with a view to the easier commission of robbery; and being employed to assist in repairing the house of a gentleman in May Fair, he took an opportunity of carrying off a sum of money, a quantity of plate, some gold rings, and four suits of clothes. Not long after this Edgeworth Bess was apprehended, and lodged in the round-house of the parish of St Giles's, where Sheppard went to visit her; but the beadle refusing to admit him, he knocked him



down, broke open the door, and carried her off in triumph; an exploit which acquired him a high degree of credit among his companions. Tom Sheppard being now as deep in crime as his brother, he prevailed on Jack to lend him forty shillings, and take him as a partner in his robberies. The first act they committed in concert was the robbing of a public-house in Southwark, whence they carried off some money and wearing apparel; but Jack permitted his brother to reap the whole advantage of this booty. Not long after this, in conjunction with Edgeworth Bess, they broke open the shop of Mrs Cook, a linen-draper in Clare Market, and carried off goods to the value of 55*l*; and in less than a fortnight afterwards, they stole some articles from the house of Mr Phillips in Drury Lane. Tom Sheppard going to sell some of the goods stolen at Mrs Cook's, was apprehended, and committed to Newgate, when, in the hope of being admitted an evidence, he impeached his brother and Bess; but they were sought for in vain.

At length James Sykes, otherwise called Hell-and-Fury, one of Sheppard's companions, meeting with him in St Giles's, enticed him into a public-house, in the hope of receiving a reward for apprehending him; and while they were drinking Sykes sent for a constable, who took Jack into custody, and carried him before a magistrate. After a short examination, he was sent to St Giles's round-house; but he broke through the roof of that place and made his escape in the night.

Within a short time after this, as Sheppard and an associate, named Benson, were crossing Leicester Fields, the latter endeavoured to pick a gentleman's pocket of his watch; but failing in the attempt, the gentleman called out "A pickpocket!" on which Sheppard was taken, and lodged in St Ann's round-house, where he was visited by Edgeworth Bess,

who was detained on suspicion of being one of his accomplices. On the following day they were carried before a magistrate, and some persons appearing who charged them with felonies, they were committed to the New Prison; but as they passed for husband and wife, they were permitted to lodge together in a room known by the name of the Newgate ward. They were here visited by many of their friends, Blueskin among the number; and being provided by them with the implements necessary to enable them to escape, Jack proceeded to secure the object which he had in view with that alacrity and energy which always characterised his actions. The removal of his fetters by means of a file was a work which occupied him a very few minutes, and he then, with the assistance of his companion, prepared for flight. The first obstacle which presented itself to them was in the shape of the heavy cross-bars which defended the aperture, by which light and air were admitted to their cell; but the application of their file soon removed the difficulty. There was then another point of a more dangerous character to overcome—the descent to the yard. Their window was twenty-five feet in height, and the only means of reaching the earth was by the employment of their blankets as ropes. These, however, would not enable them to touch the ground; but they found that there was a considerable distance for them to drop, even after they should have arrived at the extreme end of their cord. Gallantry induced our hero to give the first place to Bess, and she, having stripped off a portion of her clothes, so as to render herself lighter, descended in perfect safety. Jack followed, and they found some consolation in their being at least without the gaol, although there were then the walls of the yard to climb. These were topped with a strong *chevaux de frise* of iron, and were besides



twenty-two feet high ; but passing round them until they came to the great gates, the adventurous pair found means by the locks and bolts, by which they were held together, to surmount this, apparently the greatest difficulty of all, and they once again stood on the open ground outside the gaol. Bess now having re-assumed the clothes, of which she had denuded herself, in order that she might be the more agile in her escape, and which she had taken the precaution to throw over the wall before her, she and her paramour, once more enjoying the free air of liberty, marched into town.

It may readily be supposed that our hero's fame was increased by the report of this exploit, and all the thieves of St Giles's soon became anxious to become his " pals." He did not hesitate to accept the companionship of two of them, named Grace, a cooper, and Lamb, an apprentice to a mathematical instrument maker ; and at the instigation of the latter they committed a robbery in the house of his master, near St Clement's church, to a considerable amount. The apprentice, however, was suspected, and secured, and being convicted, received sentence of transportation. Our hero meanwhile escaped, and joining with Blueskin, they did not fail in obtaining considerable booty. The mode of disposing of the plunder which they adopted was that of employing a fellow named Field to procure them a market ; and having committed the robbery at Kneebone's, they lodged its proceeds in a stable, which they had hired, near the Horse Ferry, Westminster. Field was applied to, to find a customer for the property, and he promised to do so, and was as good as his word ; for breaking open the stable, he carried off the goods himself, and then conveyed information of the robbery to Wild, alleging that he had been concerned in it. Blueskin was tried and convicted

for the robbery, and suffered execution; and Sheppard having also been secured, he too was sentenced to death.

On Monday, 30th August, 1724, a warrant was sent for his execution, together with that of some other convicts, but neither his ingenuity nor his courage forsook him upon this, any more than upon any previous occasion. In the gaol of Newgate there was a hatch within the lodge in which the gaolers sat, which opened into a dark passage from which there were a few steps leading to the hold containing the condemned cells. It was customary for the prisoners, on their friends coming to see them, to be conducted to this hatch; but any very close communication was prevented by the *surveillance* of the gaolers, and by large iron spikes which surmounted the gate. The visits of Edgeworth Bess to her paramour were not unattended with advantage to the latter, for while in conversation, she took the opportunity of diverting the attention of the gaoler from her, while she delivered the necessary instruments to Sheppard to assist him in his contemplated escape. Subsequent visits enabled Jack to approach the wicket; and by constant filing he succeeded in placing one of the spikes in such a position that it could be easily wrenched off. On the evening on which the warrant for his execution arrived, Mrs Maggott, who was an immensely powerful woman, and Bess, going to visit him, he broke off the spike while the keepers were employed in drinking in the lodge, and thrusting his head and shoulders through the aperture, the women pulled him down, and smuggled him through the outer room, in which the gaolers were indulging themselves, into the street. This second escape not a little increased his notoriety; but an instant pursuit being made, he was compelled to lie close. Consulting with one Page, a butcher, it was

determined that they should go to Warnden, in Northamptonshire, together, where the relations of the latter lived ; but on arriving there, being treated with indifference, they immediately retraced their steps to London.

On the night after their return, they were walking through Fleet-street, when they saw a watchmaker's shop attended only by a boy, and having passed it, they turned back, and Sheppard, driving his hand through the window, stole three watches, with which they made their escape. They subsequently retired to Finchley for security ; but the gaolers of Newgate gaining information of their retreat, took Sheppard into custody, and once more conveyed him to " The Stone Jug."

Such steps were now taken as it was thought would be effectual to prevent his future escape. He was put into a strong room, called the Castle, handcuffed, loaded with a heavy pair of irons, and chained to a staple fixed in the floor. The curiosity of the public being greatly excited by his former escape, he was visited by great numbers of people of all ranks, and scarce any one left him without making him a present in money. Although he did not disdain these substantial proofs of public generosity, which enabled him to obtain those luxuries which were not provided by the city authorities for his prison fare, his thoughts were constantly fixed on the means of again eluding his keepers ; and the opportunity was not long wanting when he might carry his design into execution.

On the 14th October, 1724, the sessions began at the Old Bailey, and the keepers being much engaged in attending the Court, he thought rightly, that they would have little time to visit him, and, therefore, that the present juncture would be the most favourable to carry his plan into execution.



About two o'clock in the afternoon of the following day, one of the keepers carried him his dinner ; and having carefully examined his irons, and found them fast, he left him. Sheppard now immediately proceeded to the completion of the great work of his life, his second escape from Newgate ; in describing which we shall extract from Mr Ainsworth's work, " Jack Sheppard," in which that gentleman has given a lasting fame to our hero, and has founded a most interesting romance on the real circumstances of the life of this daring and extraordinary offender. He says : " Jack Sheppard's first object was to free himself from his hand-cuffs. This he accomplished by holding the chain that connected them firmly between his teeth and, squeezing his fingers as closely together as possible, he succeeded in drawing his wrists through the manacles. He next twisted the heavy gyves round and round, and partly by main strength, partly by a dexterous and well-applied jerk, snapped asunder the central link, by which they were attached to the padlock. Taking off his stockings, he then drew up the basils as far as he was able, and tied the fragments of the broken chains to his legs, to prevent them from clanking, and impeding his future exertions." Upon a former attempt to make his way up the chimney, he had been impeded by an iron bar which was fixed across it, at a height of a few feet. To remove this obstacle, it was necessary to make an extensive breach in the wall. With the broken links of the chain, which served him in lieu of more efficient implements, he commenced operations just above the chimney-piece, and soon contrived to pick a hole in the plaster. He found the wall, as he suspected, solidly constructed of brick and stone ; and, with the slight and inadequate tools which he possessed, it was a work of infinite skill and labour to get out a single brick. That

done, however, he was well aware the rest would be comparatively easy ; and as he threw the brick to the ground, he exclaimed triumphantly, " The first step is taken—the main difficulty is overcome."

" Animated by this trifling success, he proceeded with fresh ardour, and the rapidity of his progress was proclaimed by the heap of bricks, stones, and mortar, which before long covered the floor. At the expiration of an hour, by dint of unremitting exertion, he made so large a breach in the chimney that he could stand upright in it. He was now within a foot of the bar, and introducing himself into the hole, he speedily worked his way to it. Regardless of the risk he ran by some heavy stones dropping on his head or feet,—regardless also of the noise made by the falling rubbish, and of the imminent risk to which he was consequently exposed of being interrupted by some of the gaolers, should the sound reach their ears, he continued to pull down large masses of the wall, which he flung upon the floor of the cell. Having worked thus for another quarter of an hour, without being sensible of fatigue, though he was half stifled by the clouds of dust which his exertions raised, he had made a hole about three feet wide and six high, and uncovered the iron bar. Grasping it firmly with both hands, he quickly wrenched it from the stones in which it was mortised, and leapt to the ground. On examination it proved to be a flat bar of iron, nearly a yard in length, and more than an inch square. ' A capital instrument for my purpose,' thought Jack, shouldering it, ' and worth all the trouble I have had in procuring it.' While he was musing, he thought he heard the lock tried. A chill ran through his frame, and grasping the heavy weapon, with which chance had provided him, he prepared to strike down the first person who should enter his cell. After listening attentively for a

short time without drawing breath, he became convinced that his apprehensions were groundless, and, greatly relieved, sat down upon the chair to rest himself, and prepare for future efforts.

“ Acquainted with every part of the gaol, Jack well knew that his only chance of effecting an escape must be by the roof. To reach it would be a most difficult undertaking. Still it was possible, and the difficulty was only a fresh incitement. The mere enumeration of the obstacles which existed would have deterred any spirit less daring than Sheppard’s from even hazarding the attempt. Independently of other risks, and the chance of breaking his neck in the descent, he was aware that to reach the leads he should have to break open six of the strongest doors of the prison. Armed, however, with the implement he had so fortunately obtained, he did not despair of success. ‘ My name will not only be remembered as that of a robber,’ he mused, ‘ but it shall be remembered as that of a bold one : and this night’s achievement, if it does nothing else, shall prevent me from being classed with the common herd of depredators.’ Roused by this reflection, he grasped the iron bar, which, when he sat down, he had laid upon his knees, and stepped quickly across the room. In doing so, he had to clamber up the immense heap of bricks and rubbish which now littered the floor, amounting almost to a cart-load, and reaching up nearly to the chimney-piece ; and having once more got into the chimney, he climbed to a level of the ward above, and recommenced operations as vigorously as before. He was now aided with a powerful implement, with which he soon contrived to make a hole in the wall.

“ The ward which Jack was endeavouring to break was called the Red-room, from the circumstance of its walls having once been painted in that colour ; all traces of which, however, had long



since disappeared. Like the Castle, which it resembled in all respects, except that it was destitute even of a barrack bedstead, the Red-room was reserved for state prisoners, and had not been occupied since the year 1716, when the gaol was crowded by the Preston rebels. Having made a hole in the wall sufficiently large to pass through, Jack first tossed the bar into the room and then crept after it. As soon as he had gained his feet, he glanced round the bare black walls of the cell, and, oppressed by the misty close atmosphere, exclaimed, 'I will let a little fresh air into this dungeon: they say it has not been opened for eight years, but I won't be eight minutes in getting out.' In stepping across the room, some sharp point in the floor pierced his foot, and stooping to examine it, he found that the wound had been inflicted by a long rusty nail, which projected from the boards. Totally disregarding the pain, he picked up the nail, and reserved it for future use. Nor was he long in making it available. On examining the door, he found it secured by a large rusty lock, which he endeavoured to pick with the nail he had just acquired: but all his efforts proving ineffectual, he removed the plate that covered it with the bar, and with his fingers contrived to draw back the bolt.

"Opening the door, he then stepped into a dark narrow passage, leading, as he was well aware, to the Chapel. On the left there were doors communicating with the King's Bench Ward, and the Stone Ward, two large holds on the master debtors' side. But Jack was too well versed in the geography of the place to attempt either of them. Indeed, if he had been ignorant of it, the sound of voices, which he could faintly distinguish, would have served as a caution to him. Hurrying on, his progress was soon checked by a strong door, several inches in thickness and nearly as wide as the

passage. Running his hand carefully over it in search of the lock, he perceived, to his dismay, that it was fastened on the other side. After several vain attempts to burst it open, he resolved, as a last alternative, to break through the wall in the part nearest the lock. This was a much more serious task than he anticipated. The wall was of considerable thickness, and built altogether of stone; and the noise he was compelled to make in using the heavy bar, which brought sparks with every splinter he struck off, was so great, that he feared it must be heard by the prisoners on the debtors' side. Heedless, however, of the consequences, he pursued his task. Half an hour's labour, during which he was obliged more than once to pause to regain breath, sufficed to make a hole wide enough to allow a passage for his arm up to the elbow. In this way he was able to force back a ponderous bolt from its socket; and to his unspeakable delight, found that the door instantly yielded. Once more cheered by daylight, he hastened forward and entered the Chapel.

“Situated at the upper part of the south-east angle of the gaol, the Chapel of Old Newgate was divided on the north side into three grated compartments, or pens, as they were termed, allotted to the common debtors and felons. In the north-west angle there was a small pen for female offenders; and on the south, a more commodious inclosure appropriated to the master debtors and strangers. Immediately beneath the pulpit stood a large circular pen, where malefactors under sentence of death sat to hear the condemned sermon delivered to them, and where they formed a public spectacle to the crowds which curiosity generally attracted on those occasions. To return. Jack had got into one of the pens at the north side of the chapel. The inclosure by which it was surrounded

was about twelve feet high ; the under part being composed of oaken planks, the upper part of a strong iron grating, surmounted by sharp iron spikes. In the middle there was a gate : it was locked. But Jack speedily burst it open with the iron bar. Clearing the few impediments in his way, he soon reached the condemned pew, where it had once been his fate to sit ; and extending himself on the seat endeavoured to snatch a moment's repose. It was denied him, for as he closed his eyes—though but for an instant—the whole scene of his former visit to the place rose before him. There he sat as before, with the heavy fetters on his limbs, and beside him sat his three companions who had since expiated their offences on the gibbet. The chapel was again crowded with visitors, and every eye fixed upon him. So perfect was the illusion, that he could almost fancy he heard the solemn voice of the Ordinary warning him that his race was nearly run, and imploring him to prepare for eternity. From this perturbed state he was roused by the thoughts of his present position, and fancying he heard approaching voices, he started up. On one side of the chapel there was a large grated window, but, as it looked upon the interior of the gaol, Jack preferred following the course he had originally decided upon, to making any attempt in this quarter. Accordingly he proceeded to a gate which stood upon the south, and guarded the passage communicating with the leads. It was grated, and crested with spikes, like that he had just burst open ; and thinking it a needless waste of time to force it, he broke off one of the spikes, which he carried with him for further purposes, and then climbed over it. A short flight of steps brought him to a dark passage, into which he plunged. Here he found another strong door, making the fifth he had encountered. Well aware that the doors in this passage were much



stronger than those in the entry he had just quitted, he was neither surprised nor dismayed to find it fastened by a lock of unusual size. After repeatedly trying to remove the plate, which was so firmly screwed down that it resisted all his efforts, and vainly attempting to pick it with his spike and nail, he at length, after half an hour's ineffectual labour, wrenched off the box by means of the iron bar, and the door, as he laughingly expressed it, 'was his humble servant.'

"But this difficulty was only overcome to be succeeded by one still greater. Hastening along the passage, he came to the sixth door. For this he was prepared: but he was not prepared for the almost insurmountable difficulties which it presented. Running his hand hastily over it, he was startled to find it one complicated mass of bolts and bars. It seemed as if all the precautions previously taken were here accumulated. Any one less courageous than himself would have abandoned the attempt from the conviction of its utter hopelessness; but though it might for a moment damp his ardour, it could not deter him. Once again he passed his hand over the surface, and carefully noted all the obstacles. There was a lock, apparently more than a foot wide, strongly plated, and girded to the door with thick iron hoops. Below it a prodigiously large bolt was shot into the socket, and, in order to keep it there, was fastened by a hasp, and further protected by an immense padlock. Besides this, the door was crossed and recrossed by iron bars, clenched by broad-headed nails. An iron fillet secured the socket of the bolt and the box of the lock to the main post of the door-way. Nothing disheartened by this survey, Jack set to work upon the lock, which he attacked with all his implements; now attempting to pick it with the nail; now to wrench it off with the bar, but all without effect.



He not only failed in making any impression but seemed to increase the difficulties, for after an hour's toil he had broken the nail, and slightly bent the iron bar. Completely overcome by fatigue, with strained muscles and bruised hands, streaming with perspiration, and with lips so parched that he would gladly have parted with a treasure if he had possessed it for a draught of water, he sunk against the wall, and while in this state was seized with a sudden and strange alarm. He fancied that the turnkeys had discovered his flight, and were in pursuit of him—that they had climbed up the chimney—entered the bed-rooms—tracked him from door to door, and were now only detained by the gate, which he had left unbroken in the chapel. So strongly was he impressed with this idea, that grasping the iron bar with both hands he dashed it furiously against the door, making the passage echo with the blows. By degrees his fears vanished, and, hearing nothing, he grew calmer. His spirits revived, and encouraging himself with the idea that the present impediment, though the greatest, was the last, he set himself seriously to consider how it might best be overcome. On reflection, it occurred to him that he might, perhaps, be able to loosen the iron fillet—a notion no sooner conceived than executed. With incredible labour, and by the aid of both spike and nail, he succeeded in getting the point of the bar beneath the fillet. Exerting all his energies, and using the bar as a lever, he forced off the iron band, which was full seven feet high, seven inches wide, and two inches thick, and which brought with it, in its fall, the box of the lock, and the socket of the bolt, leaving no further hindrance. Overjoyed beyond measure at having vanquished this apparently insurmountable obstacle, Jack darted through the door.

“Ascending a short flight of steps, Jack found

at the summit a door, which, being bolted on the inside, he speedily opened. The fresh air, which blew in his face, greatly revived him. He had now reached what was called the Lower Leads—a flat, covering a part of the prison contiguous to the gateway, and surrounded on all sides by walls about fourteen feet high. On the north stood the battlements of one of the towers of the gate. On this side a flight of wooden steps, protected by a hand-rail, led to a door opening upon the summit of the prison. This door was crested with spikes, and guarded on the right by a bristling semi-circle of similar weapons. Hastily ascending the steps, Jack found the door, as he anticipated, locked. He could have easily forced it, but he preferred a more expeditious mode of reaching the roof which suggested itself to him. Mounting the door he had last opened, he placed his hands on the wall above, and quickly drew himself up. Just as he got on the roof of the prison, St Sepulchre's clock struck eight. It was instantly answered by the deep note of St Paul's; and the concert was prolonged by other neighbouring churches. Jack had been thus six hours in accomplishing his arduous task.

“Though nearly dark, there was still light enough left to enable him to discern surrounding objects. Through the gloom he distinctly perceived the dome of St Paul's, hanging like a black cloud in the air; and, nearer to him, he remarked the golden ball on the summit of the College of Physicians, compared by Garth to a ‘gilded pill.’ Other towers and spires—St Martin's, on Ludgate-hill, and Christ Church, in Newgate-street—were also distinguishable. As he gazed down into the courts of the prison, he could not help shuddering, lest a false step might precipitate him below. To prevent the recurrence of any such escape as that just described, it was deemed expedient, in more recent

times, to keep a watchman at the top of Newgate. Not many years ago, two men employed in this duty quarrelled during the night, and in the morning their bodies were found stretched upon the pavement of the yard below. Proceeding along the wall, Jack reached the southern tower, over the battlements of which he clambered, and crossing it, dropped upon the roof of the gate. He then scaled the northern tower, and made his way to the summit of that part of the prison which fronted Giltspur-street. Arrived at the extremity of the building, he found that it overlooked the flat roof of a house, which, as far as he could judge in the darkness, lay at a depth of about twenty feet below.

“Not choosing to hazard so great a fall, Jack turned to examine the building, to see whether any more favourable point of descent presented itself, but could discover nothing but steep walls, without a single available projection. Finding it impossible to descend on any side, without incurring serious risk, Jack resolved to return for his blanket, by the help of which he felt certain of accomplishing a safe landing on the roof of the house in Giltspur-street. Accordingly he began to retrace his steps, and pursuing the course he had recently taken, scaling the two towers, and passing along the walls of the prison, he descended by means of the door upon the Lower Leads. Before he re-entered the prison he hesitated, from a doubt whether he was not fearfully increasing his risk of capture; but, convinced that he had no other alternative, he went on. During all this time he had never quitted the iron bar, and he now grasped it with the firm determination of selling his life dearly if he met with any opposition. A few seconds sufficed to clear the passages through which it had previously cost him more than two hours to force his way. The floor was strewn with screws, nails, fragments of wood and stone,



and across the passage lay the heavy iron fillet. He did not disturb any of the litter, but left it as a mark of his prowess. He was now at the entrance of the chapel, and striking the door over which he had previously climbed a violent blow with the bar, it flew open. To vault over the pews was the work of a moment; and having gained the entry leading to the Red Room, he passed through the first door, his progress being only impeded by the pile of broken stones, which he himself had raised. Listening at one of the doors leading to the master-debtors' side, he heard a loud voice chanting a Bacchanalian melody; and the boisterous laughter that accompanied the song, convinced him that no suspicion was entertained in that quarter. Entering the Red Room, he crept through the hole in the wall, descended the chimney, and arrived once more in his old place of captivity. How different were his present feelings, compared with those he had experienced on quitting it! Then, full of confidence, he half doubted his power of accomplishing his designs. Now he had achieved them, and felt assured of success. The vast heap of rubbish on the floor had been so materially increased by the bricks and plaster thrown down in his attack upon the wall of the Red Room, that it was with some difficulty that he could find the blanket, which was almost buried beneath the pile. He next searched for his stockings and shoes, and when found, put them on. He now prepared to return to the roof, and throwing the blanket over his left arm, and shouldering the iron bar, he again clambered up the chimney, regained the Red Room, hurried along the first passage, crossed the chapel, threaded the entry to the Lower Leads, and in less than three minutes after quitting the Castle, had reached the northern extremity of the prison. Previously to his descent, he had left the nail and spike on the wall,

and with these he fastened the blanket to the coping-stone. This done, he let himself carefully down by it, and having only a few feet to drop, alighted in safety.

“ Having now got fairly out of Newgate, for the second time, with a heart throbbing with exultation, he hastened to make good his escape. To his great joy he found a small garret door in the roof of the opposite house open ; he entered it, crossed the room, in which there was only a small truckle-bed, over which he stumbled, opened another door and gained the stair-head. As he was about to descend, his chains slightly rattled. ‘ O lud ! what’s that ? ’ cried a female voice from an adjoining room. ‘ Only the dog,’ replied the rough tones of a man, and all was again silent. Securing the chain in the best way he could, Jack then hurried down two pair of stairs, and had nearly reached the lobby, when a door suddenly opened, and two persons appeared, one of whom held a light. Retreating as quickly as he could, Jack opened the first door he came to, entered a room, and searching in the dark for some place of concealment, fortunately discovered a screen, behind which he crept.”

Having lain down here for about two hours, he once more proceeded down stairs, and saw a gentleman take leave of the family and quit the house, lighted by the servant ; and as soon as the maid returned, he resolved to venture at all hazards. In stealing down the stairs he stumbled against a chamber door, but instantly recovering himself, he got into the street.

By this time it was after twelve o’clock, and passing by the watch-house of St. Sepulchre, he bid the watchman good-night ; and going up Holborn, he turned down Gray’s Inn Lane, and at about two in the morning, he got into the fields near Tottenham Court Road, where he took shelter in a cow-

house, and slept soundly for about three hours. His fetters were still on his legs, and he dreaded the approach of daylight lest he should be discovered. His mind, however, was somewhat relieved for the present, for at seven o'clock the rain began to fall in torrents, so that no one ventured near his hiding-place. Night coming on, the calls of hunger drove him to seek some refreshment; and going to Tottenham Court Road, he ventured to purchase some bread and cheese and small beer at a chandler's shop. He had during the day been planning various means to procure the release of his legs from the bondage of his chains; and now having forty-five shillings in his possession, he attempted to procure a hammer. His efforts, however, proved ineffectual, and he was compelled to return to his shelter for the night. The next day brought him no relief; and having again gone to the chandler's shop, he once more went back to his place of concealment. The next day was Sunday, and he now beat the basils of his irons with a stone, so that he might slip them over his heels, but the master of the cow-house coming, interrupted him, and demanded to know how he came there so confined by irons. The answer given was, that he had escaped from Bridewell, where he had been confined because he was unable to give security for the payment of a sum of money for the maintenance of a child he had had sworn to him, and the master of the house desiring him to be gone, then quitted him. A shoemaker soon after coming near, Jack called him, and telling him the same story, induced him, by a bribe of twenty shillings, to procure him a hammer and a punch. They set to work together to remove the irons, and his legs were at length freed from this encumbrance at about five o'clock.

When night came on, our adventurer tied a handkerchief about his head, tore his woollen cap



in several places, and also his coat and stockings, so as to have the appearance of a beggar ; and in this condition he went to a cellar near Charing Cross, where he supped on roast veal, and listened to the conversation of the company, all of whom were talking of the escape of Sheppard. On the Monday he sheltered himself at a public-house of little trade in Rupert-street, and conversing with the landlady about Sheppard, he told her it was impossible for him to get out of the kingdom, and the keepers would certainly have him again in a few days ; on which the woman wished that a curse might fall on those who should betray him.

On the next day he hired a garret in Newport Market, and soon afterwards, dressing himself like a porter, he went to Blackfriars, to the house of Mr Applebee, printer of the dying speeches, and delivered a letter, in which he ridiculed the printer and the Ordinary of Newgate, and inclosed a communication for one of the keepers of the gaol.

Some nights after this he broke open the shop of Mr Rawlins, a pawnbroker, in Drury Lane, where he stole a sword, a suit of wearing apparel, some snuff-boxes, rings, watches, and other effects to a considerable amount ; and determining to make the appearance of a gentleman among his old acquaintance in Drury Lane and Clare Market, he dressed himself in a suit of black and a tie-wig, wore a ruffled shirt, a silver-hilted sword, a diamond ring, and a gold watch, and joined them at supper, though he knew that diligent search was making after him at that very time. On the 31st October he dined with two women at a public-house in Newgate-street, and about four in the afternoon they all passed under Newgate in a hackney-coach, having first drawn up the blinds. Going in the evening to a public-house in Maypole Alley, Clare Market, Sheppard sent for his mother, and treated

her with brandy, when the poor woman dropped on her knees, and begged that he would immediately retire from the kingdom. He promised to do so ; but now being grown mad from the effects of the liquor he had drunk, he wandered about from public-house to public-house in the neighbourhood till near twelve o'clock at night, when he was apprehended in consequence of the information of an ale-house boy, who knew him. When taken into custody he was quite senseless, and was conveyed to Newgate in a coach, without being capable of making any resistance, although he had two loaded pistols in his possession at the time. He was now lodged securely enough ; and his fame being increased by his recent exploits, he was visited by many persons of distinction, whom he diverted by a recital of the particulars of many robberies in which he had been concerned, but he invariably concluded his narration by expressing a hope that his visitors would endeavour to procure the exercise of the royal mercy in his behalf, to which he considered that his remarkable dexterity gave him some claim.

Having been already convicted, it was unnecessary that the forms of a trial should be again gone through, and on the 10th November he was carried to the bar of the Court of King's Bench ; when a record of his conviction having been read, and an affidavit made that he was the same person alluded to in it, sentence of death was passed upon him by Mr Justice Powis, and a rule of court was made for his execution on the following Monday. He subsequently regularly attended chapel in the gaol, and behaved there with apparent decency, but on his quitting its walls, he did not hesitate to endeavour to prevent any seriousness among his fellow prisoners. All his hopes were still fixed upon his being pardoned, and even when the day of execution arrived, he did not appear to have given over all

expectations of eluding justice ; for having been furnished with a penknife, he put it in his pocket, with a view, when the melancholy procession came opposite Little Turnstile, to have cut the cord that bound his arms, and, throwing himself out of the cart among the crowd, to have run through the narrow passage where the sheriff's officers could not follow on horseback, and he had no doubt but he should make his escape by the assistance of the mob. It was not impossible that this scheme might have succeeded ; but before Sheppard left the press-yard, one Watson, an officer, searching his pockets, found the knife, and was cut with it so as to occasion a great effusion of blood. He, however, had yet a farther view to his preservation even after execution ; for he desired his acquaintance to put him into a warm bed as soon as he should be cut down, and to try to open a vein, which he had been told would restore him to life.

He behaved with great decency at the place of execution, and confessed that he had committed two robberies, for which he had been tried, but had been acquitted. His execution took place at Tyburn, on the 16th of November, 1724, in the twenty-third year of his age. He died with difficulty ; and there were not wanting those among the crowd assembled, who pitied him for the fate which befell him at so early a period of his life. When he was cut down, his body was delivered over to his friends, who carried it to a public-house in Long Acre ; from which it was removed in the evening, and buried in the church-yard of St Martin's-in-the-Fields.

The adventures of this notorious offender excited more attention than those of many of our most celebrated warriors. He was, for a considerable time, the principal subject of conversation in all ranks of society. Histories of his life issued from



the press in a variety of forms. A pantomimic entertainment was brought forward at Drury-lane theatre, called "Harlequin Sheppard" wherein his adventures, prison-breakings, and other extraordinary escapes, were represented; and another dramatic work was published, as a farce in three acts, called "The Prison-Breaker;" or, "The Adventures of John Sheppard;" and a part of it, with songs, catches, and glees added, was performed at Bartholomew Fair, under the title of "The Quaker's Opera."

The arts too, were busied in handing to posterity memoranda for us never to follow the example of Jack Sheppard.

Sir James Thornhill, the first painter of the day, painted his portrait, from which engravings in mezzotinto were made; and the few still in preservation are objects of curiosity. On this subject the following lines were written at the time:—

"Thornhill, 'tis thine to gild with fame  
The obscure, and raise the humble name;  
To make the form elude the grave,  
And Sheppard from oblivion save.

Though life in vain the wretch implores,  
An exile on the farthest shores,  
Thy pencil brings a kind reprieve,  
And bids the dying robber live.

This piece to latest time shall stand,  
And show the wonders of thy hand:  
Thus former masters graced their name,  
And gave egregious robbers fame.

Apelles Alexander drew,  
Cæsar is to Aurelius due;  
Cromwell in Lily's works doth shine,  
And Sheppard, Thornhill, lives in thine.'

In modern times, the adventures of Sheppard and his contemporaries have become even better known and more remarked, in consequence of the work to which we have already alluded, and from

which we have made an extract which details his exploits with great exactness ; but at the same time gives to them a degree of romantic interest to which they are hardly entitled. The *rage* for house-breakers has become immense, and the fortunes of the most notorious and the most successful of thieves have been made the subject of entertainments at no fewer than six of the London theatres.

Blewitt, whose name is mentioned in the foregoing sketch, as one of the earliest companions of Sheppard, was eventually hanged, with others, for the murder of a fellow named Ball, a publican and ex-thief, who lived in the Mint, and who had provoked the anger of his murderers, by threatening to denounce them. Their execution took place on the 12th of April, 1726.

# JONATHAN WILD

## EXECUTED

### FOR FELONIOUSLY CONNIVING WITH THIEVES

THE name of this most notorious offender must be familiar to all ; his arts and practices are scarcely less universally known. The power exercised by him over thieves of all classes, and of both sexes, was so great as that he may have been considered their chief and director, at the same time that he did not disdain to become their coadjutor, or the participator in the proceeds of their villainy. The system which he pursued will be sufficiently disclosed in the notices which follow of the various transactions in which he was engaged ; but it appears to have been founded upon the principle of employing a thief so long as his efforts proved profitable, or until their suspension should be attended with advantage, and then of terminating his career in the most speedy and efficacious manner, by the gallows.

The subject of this narrative was born at Wolverhampton, in Staffordshire, about the year 1682 ; and his parents being persons of decent character and station, he was put to school, where he gained a competent knowledge of the ordinary minor branches of education. At the age of fifteen he was apprenticed to a buckle-maker, at Birmingham ; and at the age of twenty-two, his time having expired, he was united to a young woman of respectability, whom he was well able to support



by the exercise of his trade. His wife soon afterwards presented him with a son ; but getting tired of a life of quietude, he started for London, leaving his wife and child destitute, and soon gained fresh employment. His disposition, however, led him into extravagances, and having contracted some debts, he was arrested, and thrown into Woodstreet Compter, where, according to his own statement, "it was impossible but he must, in some measure, be led into the secrets of the criminals there under confinement, and particularly under Mr Hitchin's management." He remained in prison upwards of four years, and the opportunity which was afforded him, of becoming acquainted with the persons, as well as the practices of thieves, was not lost upon him. A woman named Mary Milliner, one of the most abandoned prostitutes and pickpockets on the town, who was also in custody for debt, soon attracted his attention, and an intimacy having commenced in the prison, on their discharge they lived together as man and wife. The possession of a small sum of money having been obtained, they opened a public-house in Cock Alley, Cripplegate ; and from the notoriety of Mrs Milliner, and her intimate acquaintance with the thieves of the metropolis, it soon became the resort of the lowest of the class. While Wild was thus pursuing his course to his pecuniary advantage, however, he lost no time in acquiring a proficiency in all the arts of knavery ; and having, with great assiduity, penetrated into the secrets of his customers, he started as a "fence," or receiver of stolen goods ; and by this means he obtained that power, which subsequently proved so useful to him, and so dangerous to those who entrusted him with their secrets. He was at first at little trouble to dispose of the articles brought to him by thieves at something less than their real

value, no law existing for the punishment of the receivers of stolen goods ; but the evil having increased at length to an enormous degree, it was deemed expedient by the legislature to frame a law for its suppression ; and an act was therefore passed, consigning such as should be convicted of receiving goods, knowing them to have been stolen, to transportation for the space of fourteen years.

This was a check of no very trifling character to his proceedings, but his imagination suggested to him a plan by which he would save himself from all his profits being lost. He therefore called a meeting of thieves, and observed that, if they carried their booties to such of the pawnbrokers as were known to be not much affected by scruples of conscience, they would scarcely receive on the property one-fourth of the real value ; and that if they were offered to strangers, either for sale or by way of deposit, it was a chance of ten to one but the parties offering were rendered amenable to the laws. The most industrious thieves, he said, were now scarcely able to obtain a livelihood, and must either submit to be half-starved, or live in great and continual danger of Tyburn. He had, however, devised a plan for removing the inconveniences which existed, which he would act upon most honourably, provided they would follow his advice, and behave towards him with equal honesty. He proposed, therefore, that when they made prize of anything, they should deliver it to him, instead of carrying it to the pawnbroker, saying, that he would restore the goods to the owners, by which means greater sums might be raised, while the thieves would remain perfectly secure from detection. This proposition was one which met with universal approbation, and the plan was immediately carried into effect, convenient places being established as the depositories of the stolen goods. The plan thus

concerted, it became the business of Wild to apply to persons who had been robbed, and pretending to be greatly concerned at their misfortunes, to say, that some suspected goods had been stopped by a friend of his, a broker, who would be willing to give them up; and he failed not then to throw out a hint that the broker merited some reward for his disinterested conduct and for his trouble, and to exact a promise that no disagreeable consequences should follow, because the broker had omitted to secure the thieves as well as the property. The person whose goods had been carried off was not generally unwilling by this means to save himself the trouble and expense of a prosecution, and the money paid was generally sufficient to remunerate the "broker," as well as his agent. This trade was successfully carried on for several years, and considerable sums of money were amassed; but at length another and a safer plan was adopted. The name of our hero having become pretty extensively known, instead of applying to the parties who had been plundered, he opened an office, to which great numbers resorted, in the hope of obtaining the restitution of their property. In this situation he lost no opportunity of procuring for himself the greatest credit, as well as the greatest profit possible. He made a great parade in his business, and assumed a consequence which enabled him more effectually to impose upon the public. When persons came to his office, they were informed that they must each pay a crown in consideration of receiving his advice. This ceremony being despatched, he entered into his book the name and address of the applicants, with all the particulars they could communicate respecting the robberies, and the rewards that would be given provided the goods were recovered: they were then required to call again in a few days, when, he said, he hoped he



should be able to give them some agreeable intelligence. Upon returning to know the success of his inquiries, he told them that he had received some information concerning their goods, but that the agent he had employed to trace them had apprised him that the robbers pretended they could raise more money by pawning the property than by restoring it for the promised reward; saying, however, that if he could by any means procure an interview with the villains, he doubted not of being able to settle matters agreeably to the terms already stipulated; but, at the same time, artfully insinuating that the safest and most expeditious method would be to make some addition to the reward; and thus having secured the promise of the largest sum that could be obtained he would direct a third call, and then the goods would be ready to be delivered. It will be seen that considerable advantages were derived from examining the person who had been robbed; for by that means he became acquainted with particulars which the thieves might omit to communicate, and was enabled to detect them if they concealed any part of their booties. Being in the possession of the secrets of every notorious thief, they were under the necessity of complying with whatever terms he thought proper to exact, because they were aware that, by opposing his inclination, they would involve themselves in the most imminent danger of being sacrificed to the injured laws of their country; and thus he was enabled to impose both on the robber and the robbed. The accumulation of money by these artifices enabled Wild to maintain the character of a man of consequence; and to support his imaginary dignity he dressed in laced clothes and wore a sword, which martial instrument he first exercised on the person of his accomplice and reputed wife, Mary Milliner, who having on

some occasion provoked him, he instantly struck at her with it, and cut off one of her ears. This event was the cause of separation ; but in acknowledgment of the great services she had rendered him, by introducing him to so advantageous a *profession*, he allowed her a weekly stipend till her decease.

In the year 1715 Wild removed from his house in Cock Alley to a Mrs Seagoe's, in the Old Bailey, where he pursued his business with the usual success ; but while resident there, a controversy of a most singular character arose between him and a fellow named Charles Hitchin, who had been city marshal, but had been suspended for mal-practices, to whom before his adoption of the lucrative profession which he now carried on, he had acted as assistant. These celebrated co-partners in villainy, under the pretext of controlling the enormities of the dissolute, paraded the streets from Temple-bar to the Minories, searching houses of ill-fame, and apprehending disorderly and suspected persons, but those who complimented the reformers with *douceurs*, were allowed to practise every species of wickedness with impunity. Hitchin and Wild, however, grew jealous of each other, and an open rupture taking place, they parted, each pursuing the business of thief-taking on his own account.

Our readers will doubtless be somewhat surprised to hear that these rivals in villainy appealed to the public, and attacked each other with all possible scurrility in pamphlets and advertisements. Never was the press so debased as in publishing the productions of their pens. Hitchin published what he called "The Regulator ; or a Discovery of Thieves and Thief-takers." It is an ignorant and impudent insult to the reader, and replete with abuse of Wild, whom he brands, in his capacity of thief-taker, with being worse than the thief. Wild retorts with great bitterness ; but Hitchin having

greatly debased the respectable post of city marshal, the lord mayor suspended him from that office. In order to repair his loss, he determined, as the most prudent step, to strive to bury his aversion, and confederate with Wild. To effect this, he wrote as follows :

“ I am sensible that you are let into the knowledge of the secrets of the Compter, particularly with relation to the securing of pocket-books ; but your experience is inferior to mine : I can put you in a far better method than you are acquainted with, and which may be done with safety ; for though I am suspended, I still retain the power of acting as constable, and notwithstanding I cannot be heard before my lord mayor as formerly, I have interest among the aldermen upon any complaint.

“ But I must first tell you that you spoil the trade of thief-taking, in advancing greater rewards than are necessary. I give but half-a-crown a book, and when thieves and pickpockets see you and me confederate, they will submit to our terms, and likewise continue their thefts, for fear of coming to the gallows by our means. You shall take a turn with me, as my servant or assistant, and we'll commence our rambles this night.”

Wild it appears readily accepted the ex-marshal's proposals, and they accordingly proceeded to take their walks together, imposing upon the unwary and confederating with thieves, whom at the same time they did not hesitate to make their slaves. One or two instances of their mode of doing business may not be uninteresting. They are taken from a pamphlet written by Wild, and may therefore be supposed to be correct.

“ A biscuit-baker near Wapping having lost a pocket-book containing, among other papers, an exchequer bill for 100*l*, applied to Wild for its recovery : the latter advised him to advertise it,



and stop the payment of the bill, which he did accordingly ; but having no account of his property, he came to Wild several times about it, and at length told him that he had received a visit from a tall man, with a long peruke and sword, calling himself the city-marshal, who asked him if he had lost a pocket-book. He said that he had, and desired to know the inquirer's reasons for putting such a question, or whether he could give him any intelligence ; but he replied, No, he could not give him any intelligence of it as yet, and wished to be informed whether he had employed any person to search after it ? He said that he had employed one Wild ; whereupon the marshal told him he was under a mistake ; that he should have applied to him, as he was the only person in England that could serve him, being well assured it was entirely out of the power of Wild, or any of those fellows, to know where the pocket-book was (this was very certain, he having it at that time in his custody) ; and begged to know the reward that would be given. The biscuit-baker replied that he would give ten pounds, but the marshal said that a greater reward should be offered, for that exchequer bills and those things were ready money, and could immediately be sold ; and that if he had employed him in the beginning, and offered forty or fifty pounds, he would have served him. Wild gave it as his opinion, that the pocket-book was in the marshal's possession, and that it would be to no purpose to continue advertising it ; and he advised the owner rather to advance his bidding, considering what hands the note was in, especially as the marshal had often told him how easily he could dispose of bank-notes and exchequer-notes at gaming-houses, which he very much frequented. Pursuant to this advice, the losing party went to the marshal, and bid forty pounds for his pocket-book

and bill, but 'Zounds, sir,' said the marshal, you are too late!' and that was all the satisfaction he gave him. Thus was the poor biscuit-baker tricked out of his exchequer-bill, which was paid to another person, though it could never be traced back; but it happened a short time after, that some of the young fry of pickpockets, under the tuition of the marshal, fell out in sharing the money given them for this very pocket-book; whereupon one of them came to Wild, and discovered the whole matter, viz. that he had sold the pocket-book, with the 100*l.* exchequer-note in it, and other bills, to the city-marshal, at a tavern in Aldersgate-street, for four or five guineas."

"The marshal going one night up Ludgate Hill, observed a well-dressed woman walking before, whom he told Wild was a lewd woman, for that he saw her talking with a man. This was no sooner spoke but he seized her, and asked who she was. She made answer that she was a bailiff's wife. 'You are more likely to be a prostitute,' said the marshal, 'and as such you shall go to the Compter.'

"Taking the woman through St Paul's Church-yard, she desired liberty to send for some friends, but he would not comply with her request. He forced her into the Nag's Head tavern in Cheapside, where he presently ordered a hot supper and plenty of wine to be brought in; commanding the female to keep at a distance from him, and telling her that he did not permit such vermin to sit in his company, though he intended to make her pay the reckoning. When the supper was brought to the table, he fell to it lustily, and would not allow the woman to eat any part of it with him, or to come near the fire, though it was extreme cold weather. When he had supped he stared round, and applying himself to her, told her that if he had been an informer, or such a fellow, she would have called for eatables and wine

herself, and not have given him the trouble of direction, or else would have slipped a piece into his hand ; adding, ‘ You may do what you please ; but I can assure you it is in my power, if I see a woman in the hands of informers, to discharge her, and commit them. You are not so ignorant but you must guess my meaning.’ She replied, ‘ that she had money enough to pay for the supper, and about three half-crowns more ;’ and this desirable answer being given, he ordered his attendant to withdraw, while he compounded the matter with her.

“ When Wild returned, the gentlewoman was civilly asked to sit by the fire, and eat the remainder of the supper, and in all respects treated very kindly, only with a pretended reprimand to give him better language whenever he should speak to her for the future ; and, after another bottle drunk at her expense, she was discharged.”

The object of these allegations on the part of Wild may be easily seen, and the effect which he desired was at length produced ; for the marshal, having been suspended, and subsequently fined twenty pounds, and pilloried, for a crime too loathsome to be named, he was at length compelled to retire ; and thus he left Wild alone to execute his plans of depredation upon the public. The latter, not unmindful of the tenure upon which his reputation hung, was too wary to allow discontent to appear among his followers, and therefore he found it to his interest to take care that where he promised them protection, his undertaking should not be neglected or pass unfulfilled. His powers in supporting his word were greater than can be imagined, in the present state of things, where so much corruption has been got rid of ; and where his influence among persons in office failed him, his exertions in procuring the testimony of false witnesses to rebut



that evidence which was truly detailed, and the nature of which he could always learn beforehand, generally enabled him to secure the object which he had in view. His threats, however, were not less amply fulfilled than his promises; and his vengeance once declared was never withdrawn, and seldom failed in being carried out.

By his subjecting such as incurred his displeasure to the punishment of the law, he obtained the rewards offered for pursuing them to conviction; and greatly extended his ascendancy over the other thieves, who considered him with a kind of awe; while, at the same time, he established his character as being a man of great public utility.

A few anecdotes of the life and proceedings of this worthy will sufficiently exhibit the system which he pursued.

A lady of fortune being on a visit to Piccadilly, her servants, leaving her sedan at the door, went to refresh themselves at a neighbouring public-house. Upon their return the vehicle was not to be found; in consequence of which the men immediately went to Wild, and having informed him of their loss, and complimented him with the usual fee, they were desired to call upon him again in a few days. Upon their second application Wild extorted from them a considerable reward, and then directed them to attend the chapel in Lincoln's-inn-Fields on the following morning, during the time of prayers. The men went according to the appointment, and under the piazzas of the chapel perceived the chair, which upon examination they found to contain the velvet seat, curtains, and other furniture, and that it had received no kind of damage.

A thief of most infamous character, named Arnold Powel, being confined in Newgate, on a charge of having robbed a house in the neighbourhood of Golden Square of property to a great

amount, was visited by Jonathan, who informed him that, in consideration of a sum of money, he would save his life; adding that if the proposal was rejected, he should inevitably die at Tyburn for the offence on account of which he was then imprisoned. The prisoner, however, not believing that it was in Wild's power to do him any injury, bade him defiance. He was brought to trial; but through a defect of evidence he was acquitted. Having gained intelligence that Powel had committed a burglary in the house of Mr Eastlick, near Fleet Ditch, Wild caused that gentleman to prosecute the robber. Upon receiving information that a bill was found for the burglary, Powel sent for Wild, and a compromise was effected according to the terms which Wild himself had proposed, in consequence of which Powel was assured that his life should be preserved. Upon the approach of the sessions Wild informed the prosecutor that the first and second days would be employed in other trials; and as he was willing Mr Eastlick should avoid attending with his witnesses longer than was necessary, he would give timely notice when Powel would be arraigned. But he contrived to have the prisoner put to the bar; and no persons appearing to prosecute, he was necessarily dismissed; and the court ordered Mr Eastlick's recognisances to be estreated. Powel was ordered to remain in custody till the next sessions, there being another indictment against him; and Mr Eastlick represented the behaviour of Wild to the court, who reprimanded him with great severity. Powel now put himself into a salivation, in order to avoid being brought to trial the next sessions; but, notwithstanding this stratagem, he was arraigned and convicted, and was executed on the 20th of March, 1717.

At this time Wild quitted his apartments at Mrs Seagoe's, and hired a house adjoining the Coopers'

Arms, on the opposite side of the Old Bailey. His unexampled villainies were now become an object of so much consequence as to excite the particular attention of the legislature ; and in the year 1718 an act was passed, deeming every person guilty of a capital offence who should accept a reward in consequence of restoring stolen effects without prosecuting the thief. It was the general opinion that this law would effectually suppress the iniquitous practices he had carried on ; but, after some interruption to his proceedings, he devised means for evading it, which were for several years attended with success.

He now declined the custom of receiving money from the persons who applied to him ; but, upon the second or third time of calling, informed them that all he had been able to learn respecting their business was, that if a sum of money was left at an appointed place, their property would be restored the same day. Sometimes, as the person robbed was returning from Wild's house he was accosted in the street by a man who delivered the stolen effects, at the same time producing a note, expressing the sum that was to be paid for them ; but in cases where the supposed danger was to be apprehended, he advised people to advertise that whoever would bring the stolen goods to Jonathan Wild should be rewarded, and no questions asked.

In the first two instances it could not be proved that he either saw the thief, received the goods, or accepted of a reward ; and in the latter case he acted agreeably to the directions of the injured party, and there appeared no reason to criminate him as being in confederacy with the felons.

Our adventurer's business had by this time so much increased, that he opened an office in Newtoner's-lane, to the management of which he appointed his man Abraham Mendez, a Jew. This



fellow proved a remarkably industrious and faithful servant to Jonathan, who entrusted him with matters of the greatest importance, and derived great advantage from his labours. The species of despotic government which he exercised may be well collected from the following case :—He had inserted in his book a gold watch, a quantity of fine lace, and other property of considerable value, which one John Butler had stolen from a house at Newington Green; but Butler, instead of coming to account as usual, gave up his felonious practices, and lived on the produce of his booty. Wild, highly enraged at being excluded his share, determined to secure his conviction.

Being informed that he lodged at a public-house in Bishopsgate-street, he went to it early one morning, when Butler, hearing him ascending the stairs, jumped out of the window of his room, and climbing over the wall of the yard got into the street. Wild broke open the door of the room, but was disappointed at finding that the man of whom he was in pursuit had escaped. In the meantime Butler ran into a house the door of which stood open, and descending to the kitchen, where some women were washing, told them he was pursued by a bailiff, and they advised him to conceal himself in the coal-hole. Jonathan coming out of the ale-house, and seeing a shop on the opposite side of the way open, inquired of the master, who was a dyer, whether a man had not taken refuge in his house? The dyer answered in the negative, saying he had not left his shop more than a minute since it had been opened. Wild then requested to search the house, and the dyer having readily complied, he proceeded to the kitchen, and asked the women if they knew whether a man had taken shelter in the house. They also denied that they had, but on his informing them that the man was a thief, they said he would find him in the coal-hole.

Having procured a candle, Wild and his attendants searched the place without effect, and they examined every part of the house with no better success. He observed that the villain must have escaped into the street; but the dyer saying that he had not quitted the shop, and it was impossible that a man could pass to the street without his knowledge, they all again went into the cellar, and, after some time spent in searching, the dyer turned up a large vessel used in his business, and Butler appeared.

Butler, however, knowing the means by which an accommodation might be effected, directed our hero to go to his lodging, and look behind the head of the bed, where he would find what would recompense him for his time and trouble. Wild went to the place, and found what perfectly satisfied him; but as Butler had been apprehended in a public manner, the other was under the necessity of taking him before a magistrate, who committed him for trial. He was tried at the ensuing sessions at the Old Bailey; but, by the artful management of Wild, instead of being condemned to die, he was only sentenced to transportation.

The increased quantity of unclaimed property now in his hands, compelled Wild to seek some new mode of disposing of it, in a manner which should benefit him; and with this view he purchased a sloop, in order to transport the goods to Holland and Flanders, where he conceived he should find an easy market for them. The command of his vessel was entrusted to a fellow named Johnson, a notorious thief; and Ostend was selected by him as the port to which the vessel should principally trade. The goods, however, not being all disposed of there, he would carry them to Bruges, Ghent, Brussels, and other places. In return he brought home lace, wine, brandy, and the other commodities of the

countries which he visited, which he always contrived to land without affording any trouble to the officers of his Majesty's Customs. When this traffic had continued for about two years, a circumstance occurred which entirely and effectually prevented its being any longer carried on. Five pieces of lace were missing on the arrival of the ship in England, and Johnson, deeming the mate to be answerable for its production, deducted their value from the amount due to him for his pay. The latter was naturally violently irritated at this harsh proceeding, and he forthwith lodged an information against his captain, for running goods subject to exciseable duties. The vessel was in consequence seized, and Johnson was cast into prison for penalties to the amount of 700*l.* This was of course the ruin of the commercial proceedings; and the only remaining subject to be touched upon in this sketch is that which proved the ruin, and the termination of the career of Jonathan Wild.

Johnson having obtained his liberty from the government prosecution, soon returned to his old practices of robbery; but it was not long before a disagreement took place between him and Thomas Edwards, the keeper of a house which was the resort of thieves, in Long-lane, with respect to the division of some spoil, and meeting one day in the Strand, a scene of mutual recrimination took place between them, and they were at length both taken into custody. Johnson was bailed by Wild, and Edwards gained his liberty by there being no prosecution against him; but his enmity being now diverted in some degree from Johnson to Wild, he was no sooner at large than he gave information against him, in consequence of which, his warehouses being searched, a great quantity of stolen goods was discovered. It was pretended that the property belonged to Johnson, and Edwards was



arrested at his suit for a supposed debt, and lodged in the Marshalsea; but he soon procured bail. His anger against Johnson for this act was much increased, and he determined to have his revenge upon him; and meeting him in the Whitechapel-road, he gave him into the custody of an officer, who conveyed him to a neighbouring ale-house. Wild being sent for, made his appearance, accompanied by Quilt Arnold, one of his assistants, and they soon raised a riot, in the midst of which the prisoner ran off. Information was immediately given of the escape, and of Wild's interference in it; and the attention of the authorities being now called to this notorious offender, he judged it prudent to abscond, and he remained concealed for three weeks. He was unaware of the extent of the danger which threatened him, however, and at the end of that time he returned to his house. Being apprised of this, Mr Jones, high-constable of the Holborn division, went to his house in the Old Bailey; and on the 15th of February, 1725, apprehended him and Quilt Arnold, and took them before Sir John Fryer, who committed them to Newgate, on a charge of having assisted in the escape of Johnson.

On Wednesday, the 24th of the same month, Wild moved to be either admitted to bail or discharged, or brought to trial that session; and on the following Friday a warrant of detainer was produced against him in Court, to which were affixed the following articles of information:—

I. That for many years past he had been a confederate with great numbers of highwaymen, pick-pockets, housebreakers, shop-lifters, and other thieves.

II. That he had formed a kind of corporation of thieves, of which he was the head or director; and that notwithstanding his pretended services in

detecting and prosecuting offenders, he procured such only to be hanged as concealed their booty, or refused to share it with him.

III. That he had divided the town and country into so many districts, and appointed distinct gangs for each, who regularly accounted with him for their robberies. That he had also a particular set to steal at churches in time of divine service; and likewise other moving detachments to attend at court on birth-days, balls, &c., and at both houses of parliament, circuits, and country fairs.

IV. That the persons employed by him were for the most part felon convicts, who had returned from transportation before the time for which they were transported was expired; and that he made choice of them to be his agents, because they could not be legal evidences against him, and because he had it in his power to take from them what part of the stolen goods he thought fit, and otherwise use them ill, or hang them, as he pleased.

V. That he had from time to time supplied such convicted felons with money and clothes, and lodged them in his own house, the better to conceal them: particularly some against whom there are now informations for counterfeiting and diminishing broad-pieces and guineas.

VI. That he had not only been a receiver of stolen goods, as well as of writings of all kinds, for near fifteen years past, but had frequently been a confederate, and robbed along with the above-mentioned convicted felons.

VII. That in order to carry on these vile practices, and to gain some credit with the ignorant multitude, he usually carried a short silver staff, as a badge of authority from the government, which he used to produce when he himself was concerned in robbing.

VIII. That he had, under his care and direction,

several warehouses for receiving and concealing stolen goods; and also a ship for carrying off jewels, watches, and other valuable goods, to Holland, where he had a superannuated thief for his factor.

IX. That he kept in pay several artists to make alterations, and transform watches, seals, snuff-boxes, rings, and other valuable things, that they might not be known, several of which he used to present to such persons as he thought might be of service to him.

X. That he seldom or never helped the owners to the notes and papers they had lost unless he found them able exactly to specify and describe them, and then often insisted on having more than half their value.

XI. And, lastly, it appeared that he had often sold human blood, by procuring false evidence to swear persons into facts of which they were not guilty; sometimes to prevent them from being evidences against himself, and at other times for the sake of the great rewards given by the government.

The information of Mr Jones was also read in court, setting forth that two persons would be produced to accuse the prisoner of capital offences. The men alluded to in the affidavit were John Follard and Thomas Butler, who had been convicted, but pardoned on condition of their appearing to support the prosecution against their former master. On the 12th of April a motion for the postponement of the trial until the ensuing sessions was made on behalf of Wild, and after some discussion it was granted; the ground of the postponement being alleged to be the absence of two material witnesses for the defence, named —— Hays, of the Packhorse, Turnham Green, and —— Wilson, a clothier at Frome, in Somersetshire.



On Saturday, May 15, 1725, the trial came on, and the prisoner was then arraigned on an indictment for privately stealing in the house of Catherine Stretham, in the parish of St Andrew, Holborn, fifty yards of lace, the property of the said Catherine, on the 22nd of January in the same year.

He was also indicted for feloniously receiving from the said Catherine, on the 10th March, the sum of ten guineas, on account and under pretence of restoring the said lace, and procuring the apprehension and prosecution of the person by whom the same was stolen.

Before the trial came on, the prisoner was not a little industrious in endeavouring to establish a feeling in his favour, and he distributed a great number of printed papers among the jurymen and others walking about the court, entitled, "A List of persons discovered, apprehended, and convicted of several robberies on the highway; and also for burglaries and housebreaking; and also for returning from transportation; by Jonathan Wild." The list contained the names of thirty-five persons for robbing on the highway, twenty-two for housebreaking, and ten for returning from transportation, and the following note was appended to it.

"Several others have been also convicted for the like crimes; but, remembering not the persons' names who have been robbed, I omit the criminals' names.

"Please to observe that several others have been also convicted for shoplifting, picking of pockets, &c., by the female sex, which are capital crimes, and which are too tedious to be inserted here, and the prosecutors not willing of being exposed.

"In regard, therefore, of the numbers above convicted, some that have yet escaped justice, are endeavouring to take away the life of the said

"JONATHAN WILD."

The prisoner, being put to the bar, requested that the witnesses might be examined apart, which was complied with.

The trial then commenced, and the first witness called was Henry Kelly, who deposed that by the prisoner's direction he went, in company with Margaret Murphy, to the prosecutor's shop, under pretence of buying some lace ; that he stole a tin box, and gave it to Murphy in order to deliver to Wild, who waited in the street for the purpose of receiving their booty, and rescuing them if they should be taken into custody ; that they returned together to Wild's house, where the box being opened, was found to contain eleven pieces of lace ; that Wild said he could afford to give no more than five guineas, as he should not be able to get more than ten guineas for returning the goods to the owner ; that the witness received as his share three guineas and a crown, and that Murphy had what remained of the five guineas.

Margaret Murphy was next sworn, and her evidence corresponded in every particular with that of the former witness.

Catherine Stretham, the elder, deposed that between three and four in the afternoon of the 22nd of January, a man and a woman came to her house, pretending that they wanted to purchase some lace ; that she showed them two or three parcels, to the quality and price of which they objected ; and that in about three minutes after they had left the shop she missed a tin box, containing a quantity of lace, the value of which she estimated at fifty pounds.

The prisoner's counsel on this contended, that he could not be legally convicted, because the indictment positively expressed that *he stole* the lace *in* the house, whereas it had been proved in evidence that he was at a considerable distance outside when the act was committed. They allowed that

he might be liable to conviction as an accessory before the fact, or for receiving the property, knowing it to be stolen ; but conceived that he could not be deemed guilty of a capital felony, unless the indictment declared (as the act directs) that he did *assist, command, or hire*.

Lord Raymond, who presided, in summing up the evidence, observed that the guilt of the prisoner was a point beyond all dispute ; but that, as a similar case was not to be found in the law-books, it became his duty to act with great caution : he was not perfectly satisfied that the construction urged by the counsel for the crown could be put upon the indictment ; and, as the life of a fellow-creature was at stake, he recommended the prisoner to the mercy of the jury, who brought in their verdict Not Guilty.

Wild was then arraigned on the second indictment, which alleged an offence committed during his confinement in Newgate. The indictment being opened by the counsel for the crown, the following clause in an act passed in the fourth year of the reign of George the First was ordered to be read :—

“ And whereas there are divers persons who have secret acquaintance with felons, and who make it their business to help persons to their stolen goods, and by that means gain money from them, which is divided between them and the felons, whereby they greatly encourage such offenders ; be it therefore enacted by the authority aforesaid, that whenever any person taketh money or reward, directly or indirectly, under pretence or upon account of helping any person or persons to any stolen goods or chattels, every such person so taking money or reward as aforesaid (unless such person do apprehend or cause to be apprehended such felon who stole the same and give evidence against him) shall



be guilty of felony, according to the nature of the felony committed in stealing such goods, and in such and the same manner as if such offender had stolen such goods and chattels in the manner, and with such circumstances, as the same were stolen."

Mrs Stretham then, having repeated the evidence which she had before given, went on to state that on the evening of the robbery she went to the house of the prisoner in order to employ him in recovering the goods, but that not finding him at home, she advertised them, offering a reward of fifteen guineas for their return, and promising that no questions should be asked. The advertisement proved ineffectual, and she therefore again went to the house of the prisoner, and seeing him, by his desire she gave an account of the transaction and of the appearance of the thieves. He promised to inquire after her property, and desired her to call again in a few days. She did so, and at this second visit he informed her that he had gained some information respecting her goods, and expected more; and a man who was present said that he thought that Kelly, who had been tried for passing plated shillings, was the offender. The witness again went to the prisoner on the day on which he was apprehended, and said that she would give twenty-five guineas rather than not have her lace back; on which he told her not to be in too great a hurry, for that the people who had stolen the lace were out of town, and that he should soon cause a disagreement between them, by which he should secure the property on more easy terms. On the 10th March, she received a message, that if she would go to the prisoner in Newgate, and take ten guineas with her, her lace would be returned to her. She went to him accordingly, and a porter being called, he gave her a letter, saying it was addressed to the person to whom he was directed to apply for the lace, and the

porter would accompany her to carry the box home. She declined going herself, and then the prisoner desired her to give the money to the porter, who would go for her and fetch the goods, but said that he could not go without it, for that the people who had the lace would not give it up without being paid. She gave the money and the man went away, but in a short time he returned with a box sealed up, but not the box which she had lost. On opening it, she found that it contained all her lace except one piece. She asked the prisoner what satisfaction he expected, when he answered "Not a farthing; I have no interested views in matters of this kind, but act from a principle of serving people under misfortune. I hope I shall soon be able to recover the other piece of lace, and to return you the ten guineas, and perhaps cause the thief to be apprehended. For the service I can render you I shall only expect your prayers. I have many enemies, and know not what will be the consequence of this imprisonment."

The prisoner's counsel argued, that as Murphy had deposed that Wild, Kelly, and she, were concerned in the felony, the former could by no means be considered as coming within the description of the act on which the indictment was founded; for the act in question was not meant to operate against the actual perpetrators of felony, but to subject such persons to punishment as held a correspondence with felons.

The counsel for the crown observed, that from the evidence adduced, no doubt could remain of the prisoner's coming under the meaning of the act, since it had been proved that he had engaged in combinations with felons, and had not discovered them.

The judge was of opinion that the case of the prisoner was clearly within the meaning of the act;

for it was plain that he had maintained a secret correspondence with felons, and received money for restoring stolen goods to the owners, which money was divided between him and the felons, whom he did not prosecute. The jury pronounced him guilty, and he was sentenced to be executed at Tyburn, on Monday the 24th of May, 1725.

When he was under sentence of death, he frequently declared that he thought the services he had rendered the public in returning the stolen goods to the owners, and apprehending felons, was so great, as justly to entitle him to the royal mercy. He said that had he considered his case as being desperate, he should have taken timely measures for inducing some powerful friends at Wolverhampton to intercede in his favour; and that he thought it not unreasonable to entertain hopes of obtaining a pardon through the interest of some of the dukes, earls, and other persons of high distinction, who had recovered their property through his means.

He was observed to be in an unsettled state of mind; and being asked whether he knew the cause thereof, he said he attributed his disorder to the many wounds he had received in apprehending felons; and particularly mentioned two fractures of his skull, and his throat being cut by Blueskin.

He declined attending divine service in the chapel, excusing himself on account of his infirmities and saying that there were many people highly exasperated against him, and therefore he could not expect but that his devotions would be interrupted by their insulting behaviour. He said he had fasted four days, which had greatly increased his weakness. He asked the Ordinary the meaning of the words "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree;" and what was the state of the soul immediately after its departure from the body? He was



advised to direct his attention to matters of more importance, and sincerely to repent of the crimes he had committed.

By his desire the Ordinary administered the sacrament to him ; and during the ceremony he appeared to be somewhat attentive and devout. The evening preceding the day on which he suffered he inquired of the Ordinary whether suicide could be deemed a crime ; and after some conversation, he pretended to be convinced that self-murder was a most impious offence against the Almighty ; but about two in the morning, he endeavoured to put an end to his life by drinking laudanum. On account of the largeness of the dose, and his having fasted for a considerable time, no other effect was produced than drowsiness, or a kind of stupefaction. The situation of Wild being observed by two of his fellow-prisoners, they advised him to rouse his spirits, that he might be able to attend to the devotional exercises ; and taking him by the arms, they obliged him to walk, which he could not have done alone, being much afflicted with the gout. The exercise revived him a little ; but he presently became exceedingly pale ; then grew very faint ; a profuse sweating ensued ; and soon afterwards his stomach discharged the greater part of the laudanum. Though he was somewhat recovered, he was nearly in a state of insensibility ; and in this situation he was put into the cart and conveyed to Tyburn. On his way to the place of execution the populace treated him with remarkable severity, incessantly pelting him with stones and dirt.

Upon his arrival at Tyburn he appeared to be much recovered from the effects of the poison ; and the executioner informed him that a reasonable time would be allowed him for preparing himself for the important change that he must soon experience. He continued sitting some time in the cart ; but

the populace were at length so enraged at the indulgence shown him, that they outrageously called to the executioner to perform the duties of his office, violently threatening him with instant death if he presumed any longer to delay. He judged it prudent to comply with their demands ; and when he began to prepare for the execution, the popular clamour ceased.

About two o'clock on the following morning the remains of Wild were interred in St Pancras churchyard ; but a few nights afterwards the body was taken up (for the use of the surgeons, as it was supposed). At midnight a hearse and six was waiting at the end of Fig Lane, where the coffin was found the next day.

Wild had by the woman he married at Wolverhampton a son about nineteen years old, who came to London a short time before the execution of his father. He was a youth of so violent and ungovernable a disposition, that it was judged right to confine him during the time of the execution, lest he should excite the people to some tumult. He subsequently went to one of the West India colonies.

The adventures of Wild are of a nature to attract great attention, from the multiplicity and variety of the offences of which he was guilty. It has been hinted, that his career of crime having been suffered to continue so long was in some degree attributable to the services which he performed for the government, in arresting and gaining information against the disaffected, during the troubles which characterised the early part of the reign of George I ; but whatever may have been the cause of his being so long unmolested, whatever supineness on the part of the authorities, whether wilful or not, may have procured for him so continued a reign of uninterrupted wickedness, it cannot be doubted that the fact of his long safety tended so much to the

demoralisation of society, that many years passed before it could assume that tone, which the exertions of a felon like Wild were so calculated to destroy. The existing generation cannot but congratulate itself upon the excellence of the improvements which have been made in our laws, and the admirable effect which they have produced ; as well as upon the exceedingly active vigilance of the existing police, by whom crime, instead of its being supported and fostered, is checked and prevented.



## RICHARD TURPIN

### EXECUTED FOR HORSE-STEALING

THE character which this notorious offender is generally supposed to have possessed for remarkable gallantry and courage, and which in one instance has been deemed of sufficient importance to fit him for one of the heroes of a romance,\* upon being examined, appears to sink him to the low degree of a petty pilferer, of a heartless plunderer, and even of a brutal murderer.

Turpin was the son of a farmer named John Turpin, at Thackstead, in Essex; and having received a common school education, was apprenticed to a butcher in Whitechapel, in whose service he at an early age distinguished himself for the brutality of his disposition. On the expiration of his apprenticeship, he was married to a young woman named Palmer, who resided at East Ham in Essex, and set up in business for himself; but he had not been thus occupied long, before he sought to decrease his expenditure in trade by stealing his neighbours' cattle, and cutting them up and selling them in his shop. His proceedings, however, received an unexpected check; for having stolen two oxen from a Mr Giles at Plaistow, he drove them straight home; but two of Giles' servants having obtained sufficient evidence of the robbery, a warrant was obtained for his apprehension, and he only evaded the officers who were in search of him, by making his escape from the back window of his

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\* In Mr Ainsworth's romance, "Rookwood," Turpin is one of the most striking characters.

house at the very moment when they were entering at the door.

Having retreated to a place of security, he found means to inform his wife where he was concealed, and she furnished him with money, with which he travelled into the hundreds of Essex, where he joined a gang of smugglers, with whom he was for some time successful. A body of the Custom-house officers, however, by one fortunate stroke, deprived him of his ill-acquired gains. Thrown out of this kind of business, he connected himself with a gang of deer-stealers, the principal part of whose depredations were committed on Epping Forest, and the parks in its neighbourhood: but their efforts not succeeding to the expectation of the robbers, they determined to commence as housebreakers. Their plan was to fix on those houses which they presumed contained any valuable property; and while one of them knocked at the door, the others rushed in, and seized whatever they might deem worthy of their notice.

The first attack of this kind was at the house of Mr Strype, an old man who kept a chandler's shop at Watford, whom they robbed of all the money in his possession, but did not offer him any personal violence.

The well-known story of placing the old woman on the fire at Loughton is thus related by the original historian of the life of our hero:—

“Turpin now acquainted his associates that there was an old woman at Loughton who was in possession of seven or eight hundred pounds, whereupon they agreed to rob her; and when they came to the door, one of them knocked, and the rest forcing their way into the house, tied handkerchiefs over the eyes of the old woman and her maid.

“This being done, Turpin demanded what money was in the house; and the owner hesitating to tell

him, he threatened to set her on the fire if she did not make an immediate discovery. Still, however, she refused to give the desired information; on which the villains actually placed her on the fire, where she sat till the tormenting pains compelled her to discover her hidden treasure; so that the robbers possessed themselves of above four hundred pounds, and decamped with the booty."

The gang appears to have proceeded with some success, for soon afterwards they robbed the house of a farmer at Barking of above 700*l.* in a most daring manner, and then they determined to attack the house of Mr Mason, the keeper of Epping Forest. Turpin, it appears, was absent from this expedition, for he was unable to remain with so much money in his pocket as he possessed, and he therefore started to London to spend it in riot and intoxication. His companions, however, were true to their faith, and having obtained a considerable booty, they sought him in town and shared the produce of the robbery with him.

On the 11th January, 1735, Turpin and five of his companions went to the house of Mr Saunders, a rich farmer at Charlton, in Kent, between seven and eight in the evening, and, having knocked at the door, asked if Mr Saunders was at home. Being answered in the affirmative, they rushed into the house, and found Mr Saunders, with his wife and friends, playing at cards in the parlour. They told the company that they should remain uninjured if they made no disturbance, and having made prize of a silver snuff-box which lay on the table, part of the gang stood guard over the company, while the others attended Mr Saunders through the house, and, breaking open his escritaires and closets, stole above a hundred pounds, exclusive of plate. During these transactions the servant-maid ran upstairs, barred the door of her room, and called out



“Thieves !” with a view of alarming the neighbourhood ; but the robbers broke open the door, secured her, and then robbed the house of all the valuable property they had not before taken. Finding some mince pies and some bottles of wine, they sat down to regale themselves ; and meeting with a bottle of brandy, they compelled each of the company to drink a glass of it. Mrs Saunders fainted through terror, but the gallantry of the thieves would not permit her to remain in this condition, and they therefore administered some drops in water to her, and recovered her to the use of her senses. Having stayed in the house a considerable time, they packed up their booty and departed, declaring that if any of the family gave the least alarm within two hours, or advertised the marks of the stolen plate, they would return and murder them at a future time. Retiring to a public-house at Woolwich, where they had concerted the robbery, they crossed the Thames to an empty house in Ratcliffe Highway, and there deposited the stolen effects till they found a purchaser for them.

Their next attack was upon the house of Mr Sheldon, near Croydon, in Surrey, where they obtained a considerable booty in money and jewels. They then concerted the robbery of Mr Lawrence, of Edgeware, in Middlesex, to the commission of which they proceeded on the 4th February. They arrived at Edgeware at about five in the evening, and, after obtaining some refreshment, they went to the scene of their intended outrage at about seven o'clock, when Mr Lawrence had just discharged his workmen. Quitting their horses at the outer gate, they seized a sheep-boy, whom they compelled to conduct them to the house-door, under fear of death ; and they there obliged him to procure the opening of the door by knocking and calling to his fellow-servants. As soon as the door

was open, they all rushed in, and presenting pistols, they seized Mr Lawrence and his servant, threw a cloth over their faces, and taking the boy into another room, demanded what fire-arms were in the house. He replied that there was only an old gun, which they broke in pieces. They then bound Mr Lawrence and his man, and made them sit by the boy; and Turpin, searching the gentleman, took from him a guinea, a Portugal piece and some silver; but, not being satisfied with this booty, they forced him to conduct them up stairs, where they broke open a closet, and stole some money and plate. Being dissatisfied, they swore that they would murder Mr Lawrence if some further booty was not produced, and one of them took a kettle of water from the fire, and threw it over him; but it providentially happened not to be hot enough to scald him. In the interim, the maid-servant, who was churning butter in the dairy, hearing a noise in the house, apprehended some mischief, on which she blew out her candle to screen herself; but, being found in the course of their search, one of the miscreants compelled her to go up-stairs, where he gratified his brutal passion by force. They then robbed the house of all the valuable effects they could find, locked the family in the parlour, threw the key into the garden, and took their ill-gotten plunder to London.

The particulars of this atrocious robbery being represented to the king, a proclamation was issued, offering a reward of fifty guineas for the apprehension of the offenders, and a pardon to any one of the parties who should impeach his associates. This, however, was unsuccessful, and the robbers continued their depredations as before. On the 7th February, six of them assembled at the White Bear, in Drury Lane, and they agreed to rob Mr Francis, a farmer, at Marylebone. They accordingly pro-

ceeded to his house forthwith, and having bound all the servants and Mr Francis in the stable, they rushed into the house, tied Mrs Francis, her daughter, and the maid-servant, and beat them in a most cruel manner. One of the thieves then stood sentry while the rest rifled the house, in which they found a silver tankard, a medal of Charles I, a gold watch, several gold rings, a considerable sum of money, and a variety of valuable linen and other effects, which they conveyed to London.

Hereupon a reward of one hundred pounds was offered for the apprehension of the offenders ; in consequence of which two of them were taken into custody, tried, convicted on the evidence of an accomplice, and hanged in chains : and the whole gang being dispersed, Turpin went into the country to renew his depredations on the public, in any new line of business which might strike his fancy. On his way towards Cambridge he fell in with a young man of gentlemanly appearance, who was well mounted, and expecting a tolerable booty, he presented a pistol to his breast and demanded his money. The only answer which he received, however, was a hearty peal of laughter ; and when the highwayman, enraged at the supposed insult cast upon him, threatened instant destruction to the stranger in case of any further refusal, the latter exclaimed—"What ! dog eat dog ?—Come, come, brother Turpin, if you don't know me, I know you, and shall be glad of your company." The mystery was soon solved ; the stranger was no other than King, the gentleman highwayman, and a bargain of partnership was struck between them, which terminated only with the death of our hero's new associate, by the hand of his companion in iniquity. Joined now in a common cause against the public, they committed a great number of robberies, until at length they were so well known that no public-



house would receive them as guests. Thus situated, they fixed on a spot between the King's Oak and the Loughton Road, on Epping Forest, where they made a cave which was large enough to receive them and their horses. The cave was enclosed within a sort of thicket of bushes and brambles, through which they could look and see passengers on the road, while they remained unobserved ; and from this station they used to issue, and robbed such a number of persons, that at length the very pedlars who travelled the road carried fire-arms for their defence. While thus situated, they were frequently visited by Turpin's wife, who used to supply them with necessaries, and who often remained with her husband in the cave, during King's absence, for the night.

Having taken a ride as far as Bungay, in Suffolk, the robbers observed two young countrywomen receive fourteen pounds for corn, on which Turpin resolved to rob them of the money. King objected, saying it was a pity to rob such pretty girls : but Turpin was obstinate, and obtained the booty. Upon their return home on the following day, they stopped a Mr Bradle, of London, who was riding in his chariot with his children. The gentleman, seeing only one robber, was preparing to make resistance, when King called to Turpin to hold the horses, and they took from him his watch, money, and an old mourning-ring ; but returned the latter, as he declared that its intrinsic value was trifling, and that he was very unwilling to part with it. Finding that they readily parted with the ring, he asked them what he must give for the watch : on which King said to Turpin, " What say you, Jack (by which name he always called him), he seems to be a good honest fellow ; shall we let him have the watch ? " Turpin answered, " Do as you please." Whereupon King said, " You must pay six guineas

for it. We never sell for more, though the watch should be worth six-and-thirty." The gentleman therefore received the watch, and said that the money should be left at the Dial, in Birchin-lane, where they might receive it.

The greatest crime of which Turpin appears to have been guilty was committed soon after this—it was that of murder. The active inquiries which the police of the day were making after him and his companion, obliged them to separate ; but Turpin, being less wary than King, continued to inhabit their old dwelling in the forest. The tempting offer of 100*l.* reward induced the servant of a gentleman, named Thompson, and a higgler, to go out in the hope of capturing the highwayman ; and Turpin, being unaware of their object, and seeing them approach his cave with a gun, mistook them for poachers. He called to them, telling them that there were no hares in that thicket, upon which the servant exclaimed, " No, but I have found a Turpin," and instantly presenting his gun, he called upon him to surrender. Turpin spoke to him in a friendly way, but retreating from him at the same time, he seized his own gun, and shot him dead on the spot, the higgler running off with the greatest precipitation. The consequence of this most detestable act was, that a great outcry was raised against the highwayman, and he was compelled to quit the place on which he had hitherto relied for his concealment. It was afterwards examined, and there were found in it two shirts, two pairs of stockings, a piece of ham, and part of a bottle of wine. His place of refuge was in Hertfordshire ; and he sent a letter to his wife to meet him at a public-house in the town of Hertford, but going to keep his appointment he met a butcher, to whom he owed a sum of money. The latter demanded payment, and Dick promised to get the money of

his wife, who was in the next room ; but while the butcher was hinting to some of his acquaintance that the person present was Turpin, and that they might take him into custody after he had received his debt, the highwayman made his escape through a window, and rode off with great expedition.

He soon found King ; but their meeting was unfortunate for the latter, for it ended in his death. Proceeding together towards London in the dusk of the evening, when they came near the Green Man on Epping Forest, they overtook a Mr Major, who being mounted on a very fine horse, while Turpin's beast was jaded, the latter obliged him to dismount, and exchange. The robbers now pursued their journey towards London ; and Mr Major, going to the Green Man, gave an account of the affair ; on which it was conjectured that Turpin had been the robber. It was on a Saturday evening that this robbery was committed ; but Mr Major being advised to print hand-bills immediately, notice was given to the landlord of the Green Man, that such a horse as had been lost had been left at the Red Lion in Whitechapel. The landlord going thither, determined to wait till some person came for it ; and at about eleven at night, King's brother came to pay for the horse, and take him away, on which he was immediately seized, and conducted into the house. Being asked what right he had to the horse, he said he had bought it ; but the landlord, examining a whip which he had in his hand, found a button at the end of the handle half broken off, and the name of Major on the remaining half. Upon this he was given into the custody of a constable ; but as it was not supposed that he was the actual robber, he was told that he should have his liberty if he would discover his employer. Hereupon he said that a stout man, in a white duffil coat, was waiting for the horse in Red Lion-street ; on which



the company going thither, saw King, who drew a pistol, and attempted to fire it, but it flashed in the pan: he then endeavoured to pull out another pistol, but he could not, as it got entangled in his pocket. Turpin was at this time watching at a short distance off, and riding towards the spot, he saw his companion seized by some officers who had arrived. King immediately cried out "Shoot him, or we are taken;" on which Turpin fired, but his shot penetrated the breast of his companion. King called out, "Dick, you have killed me!" and Turpin then rode off at full speed.

King lived a week after this affair, and gave information that Turpin might be found at a house near Hackney Marsh; and, on inquiry, it was discovered that Turpin had been there on the night that he rode off, lamenting that he had killed King, who was his most faithful associate.

For a considerable time our hero skulked about the Forest, having been deprived of his retreat in the cave since he shot the servant of Mr Thompson; and a more active search for him having commenced, he determined to make good his retreat into Yorkshire, where he thought that he would be unknown, and might the more readily evade justice. The circumstance which induced him to take this step, appears to have been an attempt made by a gentleman's huntsman, to secure him by hunting him down with blood-hounds, whose mouths he escaped only by mounting an oak, when he had the satisfaction to see them pass by without noticing him.

Going first, therefore, to Long Sutton, in Lincolnshire, he stole some horses, for which he was taken into custody; but he escaped from the constable as he was conducting him before a magistrate, and hastened to Welton, in Yorkshire, where he went by the name of John Palmer, and assumed the character of a gentleman.

He now frequently went into Lincolnshire, where he stole horses, which he brought into Yorkshire, and there he sold or exchanged them. From his being apparently a dealer in horses, he became acquainted with many of the surrounding gentry and farmers ; and he frequently accompanied them on hunting and shooting expeditions. On one of these occasions he was returning home, when he wantonly shot a cock belonging to his landlord. Mr Hall, a neighbour who witnessed the act, said, " You have done wrong in shooting your landlord's cock," on which Turpin answered, that if he would stay while he loaded his gun he would shoot him too. Irritated by the insult, Mr Hall communicated what had occurred to the owner of the cock, whereupon complaint being made to the magistrates, a warrant was granted for the apprehension of the offender ; and on his being taken into custody, he was examined before the magistrates at Beverley and committed for want of sureties. Inquiries being made, the good opinions which had been formed of his mode of life were soon dissipated ; and it was conjectured, that instead of being a horse-dealer, he was a horse-stealer. The magistrates, therefore, examined him, and demanded to know what his business was ; and he answered, that about two years before, he had carried on business at Long Sutton as a butcher, but that having contracted some debts for sheep that proved rotten, he had been compelled to abscond, and to go into Yorkshire to live. The clerk of the peace being commissioned to ascertain the truth of this story, learned that he had never been in business, and that he was suspected to be a horse-stealer, and had been in custody but had escaped, and that there were many informations against him for various offences. He was then committed to York Castle : and soon afterwards some persons coming from Lincolnshire,

claimed a mare and a foal, which were in his possession, and stated that they had been stolen recently before.

The real name and character of the prisoner were soon afterwards discovered by means of a letter, which he wrote to his brother in Essex. The letter was as follows :—

“ York, February 6th, 1739.

“ DEAR BROTHER,—I am sorry to inform you that I am now under confinement in York Castle for horse-stealing. If I could procure an evidence from London to give me a character that would go a great way towards my being acquitted. I had not been long in this county before my apprehension, so it would pass off the readier. For Heaven’s sake, dear brother, do not neglect me ; you well know what I mean when I say I am yours

“ JOHN PALMER.”

The letter was returned to the Post Office unopened, because the postage was not paid ; and Mr Smith, the schoolmaster by whom Turpin had been taught to write, knowing the hand, carried the letter to a magistrate, by whom it was broken open, and it was thus discovered that the supposed John Palmer was Dick Turpin. Mr Smith was in consequence despatched to Yorkshire, and he immediately selected his former pupil from the other prisoners, and subsequently gave evidence at the trial as to his identity.

On the rumour that the noted Turpin was a prisoner at York Castle, persons flocked from all parts of the country to take a view of him, and debates ran high whether he was the real person or not. Among others who visited him was a young fellow who pretended to know the famous Turpin ; and having regarded him a considerable time with looks of great attention, he told the keeper he would bet him half a guinea that he was not Turpin : on



which the prisoner, whispering the keeper, said "Lay him the wager, and I'll go you halves."

When this notorious malefactor was brought to trial, he was convicted on two indictments, and received sentence of death. After conviction he wrote to his father, imploring him to intercede with a gentleman and lady of rank, to make interest that his sentence might be remitted, and that he might be transported; but although the father did what was in his power, the notoriety of his son's character was such, that no persons would exert themselves in his favour.

The prisoner meanwhile lived in the most gay and thoughtless manner, regardless of all considerations of futurity, and affecting to make a jest of the dreadful fate that awaited him.

Not many days before his execution, he bought a new fustian frock and a pair of pumps, in order to wear them at the time of his death; and on the day before that appointed for the termination of his life, he hired five poor men, at five shillings each, to follow the cart as mourners. He gave hatbands and gloves to several persons, and left a ring and other articles of property to a married woman, with whom he had been acquainted in Lincolnshire.

On the morning of his death he was put into a cart, and being followed by his mourners, he was drawn to the place of execution; in his way to which he bowed to the spectators with an air of the most astonishing indifference and intrepidity.

When he came to the fatal tree he ascended the ladder; and, on his right leg trembling, he stamped it down with an air of assumed courage, as if he was ashamed to be observed to discover any signs of fear. Having conversed with the executioner about half an hour, he threw himself off the ladder, and expired in a few minutes. Turpin suffered at York, April 10, 1739.

The spectators of the execution seemed to be much affected at the fate of this man, who was distinguished by the comeliness of his appearance. The corpse was brought to the Blue Boar, in Castle-gate, York, where it remained till the next morning, when it was interred in the church-yard of St George's parish, with an inscription on the coffin bearing the initials of his name, and his age. The grave was made remarkably deep, and the people who acted as mourners took such measures as they thought would secure the body; but about three o'clock on the following morning some persons were observed in the church-yard, who carried it off; and the populace, having an intimation whither it was conveyed, found it in a garden belonging to one of the surgeons of the city.

Hereupon they took the body, laid it on a board, and, having carried it through the streets in a kind of triumphal manner, and then filled the coffin with unslaked lime, buried it in the grave where it had been before deposited.—It is difficult to conceive the reason of all this concern and sympathy among the people; for a more depraved, heartless villain never suffered the penalty of the law. The fashion, however, which was then set appears to have continued in existence up to the present day; and fancy has done more to secure the reputation of Turpin as a hero and a man of courage and generosity, than any pains he ever took to obtain for himself a good name as an honest man. It is needless to add, that the story of the ride to York, and of the wondrous deeds of the highwayman's steed, "Black Bess," are, like many other tales of this fellow, the fabrications of some poetical brain.

## LORD LOVAT

### BEHEADED FOR HIGH TREASON

THIS lord, who in 1715 had been a supporter of the House of Hanover, in 1745 changed sides, and became a friend of the party which he had before opposed.

His career in life began in the year 1692, when he was appointed a captain in Lord Tullibardine's regiment, but he resigned his commission in order to prosecute his claim to be the Chief of the Frasers ; in order to effect which, he laid a scheme to get possession of the heiress of Lovat, who was about to be married to a son of Lord Saltoun. He raised a clan, who violently seized the young lord, and, erecting a gibbet, showed it to him and his father, threatening their instant death unless they relinquished the contract made for the heiress of Lovat. To this, fearing for their lives, they consented ; but still unable to get possession of the young lady, he seized the dowager Lady Lovat in her own house, caused a priest to marry them against her consent, cut her stays open with his dirk, and, assisted by his ruffians, tore off her clothes, forced her into bed, to which he followed her, and then called his companions to witness the consummation of the outrageous marriage. For this breach of the peace he was indicted, but fled from justice ; but he was, nevertheless, tried for a rape, and for treason, in opposing the laws with an armed force ; and sentence of outlawry was pronounced against him.



Having fled to France, he turned papist, ingratiated himself with the Pretender, and was rewarded by him with a commission ; but he was apprehended on the remonstrance of the English ambassador in Paris, and lodged in the Bastile, where having remained some years, he procured his liberty by taking priest's orders, under colour of which he became a Jesuit in the college of St. Omer.

In the first rebellion of 1715 he returned to Scotland, and joining the king's troops, assisted them in seizing Inverness from the rebels ; for which service he got the title of Lovat, was appointed to command, and had other favours conferred upon him. In the rebellion of which we are now treating, he turned sides and joined the Pretender ; a step treacherous in the extreme. When taken, he was old, unwieldy, and almost helpless ; although in that condition he had been possessed of infinite resources to assist the rebellion. He petitioned the Duke of Cumberland for mercy ; and, hoping to work upon his feelings, recapitulated his former services, the favours that he had received from the duke's grandfather, King George I, and dwelt much upon his access to court, saying " he had carried him to whom he now sued for life in his arms, and, when a baby, held him up, while his grandsire fondled upon him."

On the 9th March, 1747, however, he was taken from the Tower to Westminster Hall for trial, and the evidence adduced clearly proving his guilt to be of no ordinary character, he was convicted. He was next day brought up for judgment, and sentence of death was pronounced

That this sentence was not ill deserved, appears from a speech of Lord Belhaven, delivered in the last parliament held in Edinburgh in 1706, in which his lordship, speaking of this nobleman, then Captain Fraser, on the occasion of the Scots plot,

commonly called Fraser's plot, says " That he deserved, if practicable, to have been hanged five several times, in five different places, and upon five different accounts at least ; as having been notoriously a traitor to the court of St James's, a traitor to the court of St Germain's, a traitor to the court of Versailles, and a traitor to his own country of Scotland ; in being not only an avowed and restless enemy to the peace and quiet of its established government and constitution, both in church and state but, likewise, a vile Proteus-like apostate, and a seducer of others in point of religion, as the tide or wind changed : and, moreover that (abstracted from all those, his multiplied acts of treason, abroad and at home) he deserved to be hanged as a condemned criminal, outlaw, and fugitive, for the barbarous, cruel, and most flagitious rape, he had, with the assistance of some of his vile and abominable band of ruffians, violently committed on the body of a right honourable and virtuous lady, the widow of the late Lord Lovat, and sister of his Grace the late Duke of Athol. Nay, so hardened was Captain Fraser, that he audaciously erected a gallows and threatened to hang thereon one of the said lady's brothers, and some other gentlemen of quality, who accompanied him in going to rescue him out of that criminal's cruel hand "

On the morning fixed for his execution, 9th April, 1747, Lord Lovat, who was now in his 80th year, and very large and unwieldy in his person, awoke at about three o'clock, and was heard to pray with great devotion. At five o'clock he arose, and asked for a glass of wine and water, and at eight o'clock, he desired that his wig might be sent, that the barber might have time to comb it out genteelly, and he then provided himself with a purse to hold the money which he intended for the executioner.

At about half-past nine o'clock he ate heartily of minced veal, and ordered that his friends might be provided with coffee and chocolate, and at eleven o'clock the sheriffs came to demand his body. He then requested his friends to retire while he said a short prayer ; but he soon called them back, and said that he was ready.

At the bottom of the first pair of stairs, General Williamson invited him into his room to rest himself, which he did, and on his entrance, paid his respects to the company politely, and talked freely. He desired of the general, in French, that he might take leave of his lady, and thank her for her civilities : but the general told his lordship, in the same language, that she was too much affected with his lordship's misfortunes to bear the shock of seeing him, and therefore hoped his lordship would excuse her. He then took his leave, and proceeded. At the door he bowed to the spectators, and was conveyed from thence to the outer gate in the governor's coach, where he was delivered to the sheriffs, who conducted him in another coach to the house near the scaffold, in which was a room lined with black cloth, and hung with sconces, for his reception. His friends were at first denied entrance ; but, upon application made by his lordship to the sheriffs for their admittance, it was granted. Soon after, his lordship, addressing himself to the sheriffs, thanked them for the favour, and taking a paper out of his pocket, delivered it to one of them, saying he should make no speech and that they might give the word of command when they pleased. A gentleman present beginning to read a prayer to his lordship while he was sitting, he called one of the warders to help him up, that he might kneel. He then prayed silently a short time, and afterwards sat again in his chair. Being asked by one of the sheriffs if he would refresh himself with a glass of wine, he declined it,



because no warm water could be had to mix with it, and took a little burnt brandy and bitters in its stead. He requested that his clothes might be delivered to his friends with his corpse, and said for that reason he should give the executioner ten guineas. He also desired of the sheriffs that his head might be received in a cloth, and put into the coffin, which the sheriffs, after conferring with some gentlemen present, promised should be done ; as also that the holding up the head at the corners of the scaffold should be dispensed with, as it had been of late years at the execution of lords. When his lordship was going up the steps to the scaffold, assisted by two warders, he looked round, and, seeing so great a concourse of people, " God save us," says he, " why should there be such a bustle about taking off an old grey head, that cannot get up three steps without three bodies to support it ? "

Turning about, and observing one of his friends much dejected, he clapped him on the shoulder, saying, " Cheer up thy heart man ! I am not afraid ; why should you be so ? " As soon as he came upon the scaffold, he asked for the executioner, and presented him with ten guineas in a purse, and then, desiring to see the axe, he felt the edge, and said, " he believed it would do." Soon after, he rose from the chair which was placed for him, and looked at the inscription on his coffin, and on sitting down again, he repeated from Horace,

" Dulce et decorum est pro patriâ mori ; "

and afterwards from Ovid,

" Nam genus et proavos, et quæ non fecimus psi,  
Vix ea nostra voco "—

He then desired all the people to stand off, except his two warders, who supported his lordship while he said a prayer ; after which, he called his solicitor and agent in Scotland, Mr W. Fraser, and said,

presenting his gold-headed cane, "I deliver you this cane in token of my sense of your faithful services, and of my committing to you all the power I have upon earth," and then embraced him. He also called for Mr James Fraser, and said, "My dear James, I am going to heaven; but you must continue to crawl a little longer in this evil world." And, taking leave of both, he delivered his hat wig, and clothes, to Mr William Fraser, desiring him to see that the executioner did not touch them. He ordered his cap to be put on, and, unloosing his neckcloth and the collar of his shirt kneeled down at the block, and pulled the cloth which was to receive his head close to him. But, being placed too near the block, the executioner desired him to remove a little further back, which, with the warders' assistance, was immediately done; and, his neck being properly placed, he told the executioner he would say a short prayer and then give the signal by dropping his handkerchief. In this posture he remained about half a minute, and then, throwing his handkerchief on the floor, the executioner at one blow cut off his head, which was received in the cloth, and, with his body, was put into the coffin, and carried in a hearse back to the Tower, where it was interred near the bodies of the other lords.

His lordship professed himself a papist, and, at his request, was attended by Mr Baker, attached to the chapel of the Sardinian ambassador; and though he insisted much on the services he had done the royal family in 1715, yet he declared, but a few days before his death, that he had been concerned in all the schemes formed for restoring the house of Stuart since he was fifteen years old.

This nobleman's intellectual powers seem to have been considerable and his learning extensive. He spoke Latin, French, and English, fluently, and

other modern languages intelligibly. He studied at Aberdeen, and disputed his philosophy in Greek ; and, though he was educated a protestant, yet, after three years' study of divinity and controversy, he turned papist. He maintained an appearance of that facetious disposition for which he was remarkable, to the last ; and seems to have taken great pains to quit the stage, not only with decency, but with that dignity which is thought to distinguish the good conscience and the noble mind.

The following lines upon the execution of these noblemen are said to have been repeated with great energy by Dr Johnson, although there appears to be no ground for supposing that they were the Doctor's own composition. They first appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine :

“ Pitied by gentle minds, Kilmarnock died ;  
 The Brave, Balmerino, were on thy side ;  
 Ratcliffe, unhappy in his crimes of youth,  
 Steady in what he still mistook for truth,  
 Beheld his death so decently unmoved,  
 The soft lamented, and the brave approved.  
 But Lovat's end indifferently we view,  
 True to no King, to no religion true :  
 No fair forgets the ruin he has done ;  
 No child laments the tyrant of his son ;  
 No Tory pities thinking what he was ;  
 No Whig compassions, for he left the cause ;  
 The brave regret not, for he was not brave ;  
 The honest mourn not, knowing him a knave.”



THE REV JOHN GRIERSON  
AND  
THE REV MR WILKINSON

TRANSPORTED FOR UNLAWFULLY PERFORMING THE  
MARRIAGE CEREMONY

AMONG the singular customs of our forefathers, arising in a great measure from their indifference to decorum, one of the most remarkable was matrimony, solemnised, we were going to say, but the fittest word would be "performed," by the parsons in the Fleet prison. These clerical functionaries were disreputable and dissolute men, mostly prisoners for debt, who, to the great injury of public morals, dared to insult the dignity of their holy profession by marrying in the precincts of the Fleet prison, at a minute's notice, any persons who might present themselves for that purpose. No questions were asked, no stipulations made, except as to the amount of the fee for the service, or the quantity of liquor to be drunk on the occasion. It not infrequently happened, indeed, that the clergyman, the clerk, the bridegroom and the bride, were drunk at the very time the ceremony was performed. These disgraceful members of the sacred calling had their "plyers," or "barkers," who, if they caught sight of a man and woman walking together along the streets of the neighbourhood, pestered them as the Jew clothesmen in the present day tease the passers-by in Middlesex Street, with solicitations, not easily to be shaken off, as to whether they wanted

a clergyman to marry them. Mr Burn, a gentleman who some years ago published a curious work on the Fleet Registers, says he has in his possession an engraving (published about 1747) of "A Fleet Wedding between a brisk young Sailor and Landlady's daughter of Rederiff." "The print," he adds, "represents the old Fleet market and prison, with the sailor, landlady, and daughter, just stepping from a hackney-coach, while two Fleet parsons in canonicals are contending for the job. The following verses are in the margin :

"Scarce had the coach discharg'd its trusty fare,  
But gaping crowds surrounded th' amorous pair ;  
The busy plyers make a mighty stir,  
And whisp'ring cry, D'ye want the Parson, Sir ?  
Pray step this way—just to the Pen in Hand,  
The Doctor's ready there 'at your command :  
This way (another cries), Sir, I declare,  
The true and ancient Register is here :

"The alarmed Parsons quickly hear the din,  
And haste with soothing words t' invite 'em in :  
In this confusion jostled to and fro,  
Th' enamour'd couple know not where to go,  
Till, slow advancing from the coach's side,  
Th' experienced matron came (an artful guide,)  
She led the way without regarding either,  
And the just Parson splic'd 'em both together."

One of the most notorious of these scandalous officials was a man of the name of George Keith, a Scotch minister, who, being in desperate circumstances, set up a marriage-office in May Fair, and subsequently in the Fleet, and carried on the same trade which since was long practised in front of the blacksmith's anvil at Gretna Green. This man's wedding-business was so extensive and so scandalous, that the Bishop of London found it necessary to excommunicate him. It has been said of this person and "*his journeyman*," that one morning, during the Whitsun holidays, they united a greater number of couples than had been married at any

ten churches within the bills of mortality. Keith lived till he was eighty-nine years of age, and died in 1735. The Rev Dr Gaynham, another infamous functionary, was familiarly called the Bishop of Hell.

“Many of the early Fleet weddings,” observes Mr. Burn, “were *really* performed at the chapel of the Fleet; but as the practice extended, it was found more convenient to have other places, within the Rules of the Fleet, (added to which, the Warden was forbidden, by act of parliament, to suffer them,) and, thereupon, many of the Fleet parsons and tavern-keepers in the neighbourhood fitted up a room in their respective lodgings or houses as a chapel! The parsons took the fees, allowing a portion to the plyers, &c.; and the tavern-keepers, besides sharing in the money paid, derived a profit from the sale of the liquors which the wedding-party drank. In some instances, the tavern-keepers *kept a parson on the establishment*, at a weekly salary of twenty shillings! Most of the taverns near the Fleet kept their own registers, in which (as well as in their own books) the parsons entered the weddings.” Some of these scandalous members of the highest of all professions were in the habit of hanging signs out of their windows with the words “WEDDINGS PERFORMED CHEAP HERE.”

Keith, of whom we have already spoken, seems to have been a barefaced profligate; but there is something exceedingly affecting in the stings of conscience and forlorn compunction of one Walter Wyatt, a Fleet parson, in one of whose pocket-books of 1716 are the following secret (as he intended them to be) outpourings of remorse:—

“Give to every man his due, and learn y<sup>e</sup> way of Truth.”

“This advice cannot be taken by those that are concerned in y<sup>e</sup> Fleet marriages; not so much as y<sup>e</sup>



Priest can do y<sup>e</sup> thing y<sup>t</sup> it is just and right there, unless he designs to starve. For by lying, bullying, and swearing, to extort money from the silly and unwary people, you advance your business and get y<sup>e</sup> pelf, which always wastes like snow in sunshiney day."

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The marrying in the Fleet is the beginning of eternal woe."

"If a clerk or pleyer tells a lye, you must vouch it to be as true as y<sup>e</sup> Gospel, and if disputed, you must affirm with an oath to y<sup>e</sup> truth of a downright damnable falsehood.—Virtus laudatur & algetr."

"May God forgive me what is past, and give me grace to forsake such a wicked place, where truth and virtue can't take place unless you are resolved to starve."

But this very man, whose sense of his own disgrace was so deep and apparently so contrite, was one of the most notorious, active, and money-making of all the Fleet parsons. His practice was chiefly in taverns, and he had been known to earn nearly sixty pounds in less than a month.

With such facilities for marriage, and such unprincipled ministers, it may easily be imagined that iniquitous schemes of all sorts were perpetrated under the name of Fleet weddings. The parsons were ready, for a bribe, to make false entries in their registers, to ante-date weddings, to give fictitious certificates, and to marry persons who would declare only the initials of their names. Thus, if a spinster or widow in debt desired to cheat her creditors by pretending to have been married before the debt was contracted, she had only to present herself at one of the marriage-houses in the Fleet, and, upon payment of a small additional fee to the clergyman, a man could instantly be found on the spot to act as bridegroom for a few shillings,

and the worthless chaplain could find a blank place in his Register for any year desired, so that there was no difficulty in making the necessary record. They would also for a consideration, obliterate any given entry. The sham bridegrooms, under different names, were married over and over again, with the full knowledge of the clerical practitioners. If, in other instances, a libertine desired to possess himself of any young and unsuspecting woman, who would not yield without being married, nothing was easier than to get the service performed at the Fleet without even the specification of names; so that the poor girl might with impunity be shaken off at pleasure. Or if a parent found it necessary to legitimatise his natural children, a Fleet parson could be procured to give a marriage certificate at any required date. In fact, all manner of people presented themselves for marriage at the unholy dens in the Fleet taverns,—runaway sons and daughters of peers,—Irish adventurers and foolish rich widows,—clodhoppers and ladies from St Giles's,—footmen and decayed beauties,—soldiers and servant-girls,—boys in their teens and old women of seventy,—discarded mistresses, “given away” by their former admirers to pitiable and sordid bridegrooms,—night-wanderers and intoxicated apprentices,—men and women having already wives and husbands,—young heiresses conveyed thither by force, and compelled, *in terrorem*, to be brides,—and common labourers and female paupers dragged by parish-officers to the profane altar, stained by the relics of drunken orgies, and reeking with the fumes of liquor and tobacco! Nay, it sometimes happened that the “contracting parties” would send from houses of vile repute for a Fleet parson, who could readily be found to attend even in such places and under such circumstances, and there unite the couple in matrimony!

Of what were called the "Parish Weddings" it is impossible to speak in terms of sufficient reprobation. Many of the churchwardens and overseers of that day were in the frequent practice of "getting up" marriages in order to throw their paupers on neighbouring parishes. For example, in the *Daily Post* of the 4th July, 1741, is the following paragraph:—

"On Saturday last the churchwardens for a certain parish in the city, in order to remove a load from their own shoulders, gave forty shillings, and paid the expense of a Fleet marriage, to a miserable blind youth, known by the name of Ambrose Tally, who plays on the violin in Moorfields, in order to make a settlement on the wife and future family in Shoreditch parish. To secure their point they sent a parish-officer to see the ceremony performed. One cannot but admire the ungenerous proceeding of this city parish, as well as their unjustifiable abetting and encouraging an irregularity so much and so justly complained of, as these Fleet matches. Invited and uninvited were a great number of poor wretches, in order to spend the bride's parish fortune."

In the *Grub Street Journal* for 1735, is the following letter, faithfully describing, says Mr Burn, the treachery and low habits of the Fleet parsons:—

"SIR,—There is a very great evil in this town, and of dangerous consequence to our sex, that has never been suppressed, to the great prejudice and ruin of many hundreds of young people every year, which I beg some of your learned heads to consider of, and consult of proper ways and means to prevent for the future. I mean the ruinous marriages that are practised in the liberty of the Fleet and thereabouts, by a set of drunken swearing parsons, with their myrmidons, that wear black coats, and pretend to be clerks and registers to the Fleet. These



ministers of wickedness ply about Ludgate-hill, pulling and forcing people to some peddling ale-house or a brandy-shop to be married, even on a Sunday stopping them as they go to church, and almost tearing their clothes off their backs. To confirm the truth of these facts I will give you a case or two which lately happened.

“ Since Midsummer last a young lady of birth and fortune was deluded and forced from her friends, and, by the assistance of a wry-necked swearing parson, married to an atheistical wretch, whose life is a continued practice of all manner of vice and debauchery. And since the ruin of my relation, another lady of my acquaintance had like to have been trepanned in the following manner. This lady had appointed to meet a gentlewoman at the Old Playhouse in Drury-lane, but extraordinary business prevented her coming. Being alone when the play was done, she bade a boy call a coach for the city. One dressed like a gentleman helps her into it, and jumps in after her. ‘ Madam,’ says he, ‘ this coach was called for me, and since the weather is so bad, and there is no other, I beg leave to bear you company. I am going into the city, and will set you down wherever you please.’ The lady begged to be excused ; but he bade the coachman drive on. Being come to Ludgate-hill, he told her his sister, who waited his coming but five doors up the court, would go with her in two minutes. He went, and returned with his pretended sister, who asked her to step in one minute, and she would wait upon her in the coach. Deluded with the assurance of having his sister’s company, the poor lady foolishly followed her into the house, when instantly the sister vanished, and a tawny fellow in a black coat and black wig appeared. ‘ Madam, you are come in good time ; the Doctor was just a-going.’—‘ The Doctor ! ’ says she, horribly frightened, fearing it was a mad-

house: 'what has the Doctor to do with me?'—  
'To marry you to that gentleman. The Doctor has waited for you these three hours, and will be payed by you or that gentleman before you go!'—'That gentleman,' says she, recovering herself, 'is worthy a better fortune than mine,' and begged hard to be gone. But Doctor Wryneck swore she should be married, or if she would not, he would still have his fee, and register the marriage from that night. The lady, finding she could not escape without money or a pledge, told them she liked the gentleman so well, she would certainly meet him to-morrow night, and gave them a ring as a pledge, which, says she, 'was my mother's gift on her death-bed, enjoining that if ever I married it should be my wedding-ring.' By which cunning contrivance she was delivered from the black Doctor and his tawny crew. Some time after this I went with this lady and her brother in a coach to Ludgate-hill in the day-time, to see the manner of picking up people to be married. As soon as our coach stopped near Fleet Bridge, up comes one of the myrmidons. 'Madam,' says he, 'you want a parson?'—'Who are you?' says I.—'I am the clerk and register of the Fleet.'—'Show me the chapel.' At which comes a second, desiring me to go along with him. Says he, 'That fellow will carry you to a peddling alehouse.' Says a third, 'Go with me; he will carry you to a brandy-shop.' In the interim comes the Doctor. 'Madam,' says he, 'I'll do your job for you presently!'—'Well, gentlemen,' says I, 'since you can't agree, and I can't be married quietly, I'll put it off 'till another time:' so drove away. Learned sirs, I wrote this in regard to the honour and safety of my own sex: and if for our sakes you will be so good as to publish it, correcting the errors of a woman's pen, you will oblige our whole sex, and none more than, sir,

"Your constant reader and admirer,

"VIRTUOUS."

Such are but a few of the iniquities practised by the ministers of the Fleet. Similar transactions were carried on at the Chapel in May Fair, the Mint in the Borough, the Savoy, and other places about London ; until the public scandal became so great, especially in consequence of the marriage at the Fleet of the Hon. Henry Fox with Georgiana Caroline, eldest daughter of the Duke of Richmond, that at length,—not, however, without much and zealous opposition,—a Marriage Bill was passed, enacting that any person solemnising matrimony in any other than a church or public chapel, without banns or licence, should, on conviction, be adjudged *guilty of felony*, and be transported for fourteen years, and that all such marriages *should be void*. This act was to take effect from the 25th of March, 1754.

Upon the passing of this law, Keith, the parson who has already been alluded to, published a pamphlet entitled, “Observations on the Act for Preventing Clandestine Marriages.” To this he prefixed his portrait. The following passages are highly characteristic of the man :—

“ ‘Happy is the wooing that is not long a-doing,’ is an old proverb, and a very true one ; but we shall have no occasion for it after the 25th day of March next, when we are commanded to read it backwards, and from that period (fatal indeed to Old England !) we must date the declension of the numbers of the inhabitants of England.”—“As I have married many thousands, and consequently have on those occasions seen the humour of the lower class of people, I have often asked the married pair how long they had been acquainted ; they would reply, some more, some less, but the generality did not exceed the acquaintance of a week, some only of a day, half a day,” &c.—“Another inconveniency which will arise from this act will be, that the



expense of being married will be so great, that few of the lower class of people can afford ; for I have often heard a Fleet-parson say, that many have come to be married when they have but half-a-crown in their pockets, and sixpence to buy a pot of beer, and for which they have pawned some of their clothes.” —“ I remember once on a time, I was at a public-house at Ratcliff, which then was full of sailors and their girls ; there was fiddling, piping, jigging, and eating : at length, one of the tars starts up, and says, ‘ D—n ye, Jack, I’ll be married just now ; I will have my partner, and . . . . . ’ The joke took, and in less than two hours ten couple set out for the Fleet. I stayed their return. They returned in coaches, five women in each coach, the tars, some running before, others riding on the coach-box, and others behind. The cavalcade being over, the couples went into an upper room, where they concluded the evening with great jollity. The next time I went that way I called on my landlord and asked him concerning this marriage adventure. He at first stared at me, but recollecting, he said those things were so frequent that he hardly took any notice of them ; for, added he, it is a common thing when a fleet comes in, to have two or three hundred marriages in a week’s time, among the sailors.” He humorously concludes, “ If the present Act in the form it now stands should (which I am sure is impossible) be of service to my country, I shall then have the satisfaction of having been the occasion of it, because the compilers thereof have done it with a pure design of suppressing my *Chapel*, which makes me the most celebrated man in this kingdom, though not the greatest.”

The passing of the Marriage Act put a stop to the marriages at May Fair ; but the day before the Act came into operation (Lady-day, 1754,) sixty-one couples were married there.

It would exceed the limits of this brief sketch were we to give the *official* history of the different scandalous ministers who thus disgraced themselves, and impiously trifled with one of our most sacred institutions. That some of these wretched adventurers were merely pretended clergymen is certain ; but it cannot be denied that many of them were actually in holy orders.

Of this latter class were Grierson and Wilkinson, the subjects of our present notice ; and notwithstanding the heavy penalties imposed by the statute, they were not to be deterred from continuing the dangerous and unlawful traffic in which they had been engaged. Wilkinson who was the brother of a celebrated comedian of the day, it would appear, was the owner of a chapel in the Savoy, and Grierson was his assistant ; and their proceedings having at length become too notorious to be passed over, proceedings were instituted against them. Grierson was first apprehended, and his employer sought safety in flight ; but supposing that he could not be deemed guilty of any offence, as he had not actually performed the marriage ceremony, a duty which he had left to his journeyman, he returned to his former haunts. It was not long before he was secured, however, and having been convicted with Grierson, they were shipped off as convicts together to the colonies, in the year 1757.

## EUGENE ARAM

EXECUTED FOR MURDER

WE are now arrived at that period which brings to our view perhaps the most remarkable trial in our whole Calendar. The offender was a man of extraordinary endowments and of high education, and therefore little to be suspected of committing so foul a crime as that proved against him.

Much has been written upon the subject of this murder, and attempts have been made, even of late years, to show the innocence of Aram. The contents of the publications upon the subject would be sufficient of themselves to fill our volume; and it would be useless to republish arguments, which, having had due circulation and due consideration, have failed in their object; which was to convince the world that this offender was the victim of prejudice, and fell an innocent sacrifice to the laws of his country. We shall, therefore, abstain from giving this case greater space in our Calendar than that to which it is entitled, as well on account of the peculiarity of its nature, as of the great interest which its mention has always excited. The peculiarities of the case are twofold: first, the great talents of the offender, and secondly, the extraordinary discovery of the perpetration of the murder, and of the evidence which led to the conviction of the murderer. On the former point, indeed, some seem to have entertained a doubt; for about thirty years after his execution, his name being inserted among the literary characters of the country, in the



'Biographia Britannica,' and his high erudition being mentioned, a pamphlet was put forth, complaining of this step on the part of the editors of that work, and accusing them of a want of impartiality in affording their meed of praise to Aram, and withholding it from Bishop Atherton, who also met with an ignominious death. The charge was, however, answered more ably than it was made; and as it may prove interesting to our readers, we shall subjoin the refutation to the complaint, which appears distinctly to support Aram's right to the character which was originally given to him. It is said:—

“Objections are made to the admission of Eugene Aram into the 'Biographia Britannica,' and the exclusion of Bishop Atherton; but it appears to me that the remarks on this subject are far from being just. The insertion of Aram is objected to because he was a man of bad principles, and terminated his life on the gallows; but it should be remembered that it was never understood that in the 'Biographia Britannica' the lives of virtuous men only were to be recorded. In the old edition are the lives of several persons who ended their days by the hands of the executioner. Bonner was not a virtuous man, and yet was very properly inserted, as well as Henry Cuff, who was executed at Tyburn in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. As to Eugene Aram, it is truly said of him in the 'Biographia Britannica,' in the article objected to, that the progress he made in literature, allowing for the little instruction he had received, may justly be considered as astonishing; and that his powers of mind were uncommonly great cannot reasonably be questioned. Eugene Aram possessed talents and acquisitions that might have classed him among the most respectable of human characters, if his moral qualities had been equal to his intellectual. It was certainly the extraordinary talents and acquirements of

Eugene Aram which occasioned his introduction into the 'Biographia'; and I know that by persons of undoubted taste and judgment, the account of him in that work has been thought a curious and interesting article. His singular defence alone was well worthy of being preserved in such a work.

"With respect to Bishop Atherton, he never had the least claim to insertion in such a work as the 'Biographia Britannica,' and was therefore very properly omitted in the new edition. He was not in the least distinguished for genius or learning; his merely being a bishop could give him no just pretensions, and still less the unnatural crime for which he suffered. The friends of Bishop Atherton say that his reputation was suspected to have been destroyed, and his catastrophe effected, more by the contrivance of a party than by the aggravated guilt with which he was charged. If this were perfectly just, which however may be reasonably questioned, it would not give Bishop Atherton the least claim to insertion in the 'Biographia Britannica.' Aram was inserted on account of his uncommon talents and learning; but Atherton, who was not distinguished for either, never had the least pretension to be recorded in such a work."

The talents and abilities of this criminal, therefore, seem to be undoubted; but that a man possessing powers of intellect so great should have been guilty of such a crime as that which he committed, seems most extraordinary.

Within the second peculiarity of the case will very properly come the narrative of the life of its hero, as well as the circumstances attending the commission of the crime and the discovery of its perpetrator. A succinct description of the case will probably be more intelligible than a detail of all the exceedingly minute circumstances by which it was surrounded.

Eugene Aram was born at the village of Netherdale, in Yorkshire, in the year 1704, of an ancient and highly respectable family; but although it is shown by the chronicles that one of his ancestors served the office of high sheriff in the reign of Edward the Third, it appears that at the time of the birth of Eugene, the vicissitudes of fortune had so far reduced its rank, that his father was compelled to support himself and his children by working as a gardener in the house of Sir Edward Blackett; although in that situation he was well employed and highly respected. In his infancy, Aram's parents removed to the village of Shelton, near Newby, in the same county; and when about six years old, his father, having saved a small sum of money out of his weekly earnings, purchased a small cottage at Bondgate, near Ripon. The first indications of that singular genius which afterwards displayed itself in so remarkable a manner in our hero, were given while his father was in the service of Sir Edward. Eugene was employed as an attendant upon that gentleman, and he early displayed a taste for literature, which was fostered and supported by his indulgent master. His disposition was solitary, and every leisure hour which presented itself to him was devoted to retirement and study; and in the employment which good fortune had bestowed upon him, ample opportunities were afforded him of following the bent of his inclinations. He applied himself chiefly to mathematics, and at the age of sixteen he had acquired a considerable proficiency in them; but his kind and indulgent master dying about this time, he was employed by his brother, Mr Christopher Blackett, a merchant in London, who took him into his service as book-keeper. This was an occupation ill-suited to his desires, and an attack of the small-pox having rendered his return to Yorkshire



necessary, he did not afterwards resume his employment in London, but at the invitation of his father he remained at Newby, to pursue his studies. He now found that the study of mathematics possessed but few charms; and the politer subjects of poetry, history, and antiquities, next engaged his attention. Every day served to increase the store of knowledge which he possessed, and his fame as a scholar having now extended to his native place, he was invited to take charge of a school there. The means of study and of profit appeared to him to be thus united, and he immediately accepted the offer which was made; and after a short time he married a young woman of the village, to whom he appeared tenderly attached. To this marriage, however, which proved unhappy, he attributed all his subsequent misfortunes; but whether with truth or not, the course of the narrative does not distinctly disclose. His deficiency in the learned languages now struck him, and he immediately set about conquering the difficulties which presented themselves in this new field of research; and so rapid was his progress, that ere a year had passed, he was able to read with ease the less difficult of the Latin and Greek historians and poets. In the year 1734 an opportunity was afforded him of adding a knowledge of the Hebrew language to his list of acquirements; for in that year Mr William Norton, of Knaresborough, a gentleman of great talents, who had conceived a strong attachment towards him, invited him to his house, and afforded him the means necessary for pursuing its study. He continued in his situation in Yorkshire until the year 1745, when he again visited London, and accepted an engagement in the school of the Rev Mr Plainblanc, in Piccadilly, as usher in Latin and writing; and, with this gentleman's assistance, he acquired the knowledge of the

French language. He was afterwards employed as an usher and tutor in several different parts of England ; in the course of which, through his own exertions, he became acquainted with heraldry and botany ; and so great was his perseverance, that he also learned the Chaldaic and Arabic languages. His next step was to investigate the Celtic in all its dialects ; and, having begun to form collections, and make comparisons between the Celtic, the English, the Latin, the Greek, and the Hebrew, and found a great affinity between them, he resolved to proceed through all those languages, and to form a comparative lexicon. But, amid these learned labours and inquiries, it appears that he committed a crime which could not naturally have been expected from a man of so studious a turn, as the inducement which led him to it was merely the gain of wealth, of which the scholar is seldom covetous.

On the 8th of February, 1745, in conjunction with a man named Richard Houseman, he committed the murder for which his life was afterwards forfeited to the laws of his country. The object of this diabolical crime was Daniel Clarke, a shoemaker, living at Knaresborough ; and it appears that this unfortunate man, having lately married a woman of a good family, industriously circulated a report that his wife was entitled to a considerable fortune, which he should soon receive. Aram and Houseman, in consequence, conceiving hopes of procuring some advantage from this circumstance, persuaded Clarke to make an ostentatious show of his own riches, in order to induce his wife's relations to give him that fortune of which he had boasted. It is not impossible that in giving their subsequent victim this advice, they may at the time have acted from a spirit of friendship, and without any intention of committing that crime for which they afterwards received their reward ; but the belief that the

design was already formed receives equal confirmation from subsequent events.

Clarke, it seems, was easily induced to comply with a hint so agreeable to his own desires ; and he borrowed, and bought on credit, a large quantity of silver plate, with jewels, watches, rings, &c. He told the persons of whom he purchased, that a merchant in London had sent him an order to buy such plate for exportation ; and no doubt was entertained of his credit till his sudden disappearance in February, 1745, when it was imagined that he had gone abroad, or at least to London, to dispose of his ill-acquired property.

Whatever doubt may exist as to the original intention of the parties, their object at this time is perfectly clear, and there can be no hesitation in supposing that Aram and Houseman had at this time determined to murder their dupe, in order to share the booty. On the night of the 8th February, 1745, they persuaded Clarke to take a walk with them, in order to consult upon the proper method to dispose of the effects ; and, engaged in the discussion of this subject, they turned into a field, at a small distance from the town, well known by the name of St Robert's Cave. On their arrival there, Aram and Clarke went over a hedge towards the cave ; and when they had got within six or seven yards of it, Houseman (by the light of the moon) saw Aram strike Clarke several times, and at length beheld him fall, but never saw him afterwards. These were the facts immediately connected with the murder, which were proved at the trial by Houseman, who was admitted King's evidence ; and, whatever were the subsequent proceedings of the parties in respect of the body, they must remain a mystery.

The murderers, going home, shared Clarke's ill-gotten treasure, the half of which Houseman



concealed in his garden for a twelvemonth, and then took it to Scotland, where he sold it. In the meantime Aram carried his share to London, where he sold it to a Jew, and then returned to his engagement with Mr Plainblanc, in Piccadilly.

Fourteen years afterwards elapsed, and no tidings being received of Aram, it was concluded that he was dead; and these fourteen years had also elapsed without any clue being obtained to unravel the mystery of the sudden disappearance of Clarke. The time at length came, however, at which all the doubts which existed upon both subjects were to be solved. In the year 1758, a labourer named Jones was employed to dig for stone in St Robert's Cave, in order to supply a limekiln at a place called Thistle Hill, near Knaresborough; and having dug about two feet deep, he found the bones of a human body, still knit together by the ligaments of the joints. It had evidently been buried double; and there were indications about it which could not but lead to the supposition that some unfair means had been resorted to in order to deprive the living being of life. The incident afforded good grounds for general curiosity being raised, and general inquiry taking place; and hints were soon thrown out that it might be the body of Clarke, whose unexpected disappearance was still fresh in the memory of many, and whose continued absence had been the subject of so much surprise. Suggestions of his murder which had been thrown out by Aram's wife were called to mind, and a coroner's inquest being held, she was summoned. By this time a general impression prevailed that the remains found were those of Clarke, and the testimony of Mrs Aram greatly confirmed the idea which had gone abroad. She deposed that she believed that Clarke had been murdered by Houseman and her husband, and that they had

acquired considerable booty from the crime; but she was unable to give any account of her husband, or to state whether he was still in existence or not. Inquiries being made, however, Houseman was soon found; and on his being brought forward to be examined, he exhibited the utmost confusion. The coroner desired that he would take up one of the bones, probably with a view of seeing what effect such a proceeding would produce; and upon his doing so, he showed still further terror, and exclaimed, "This is no more Daniel Clarke's bone than it is mine!" The suspicions which were already entertained of his guilt were, in a great measure, confirmed by this observation; and it was generally believed that he knew the precise spot where the real remains of the murdered man were deposited, even if he had not been a party to their interment. He was therefore strictly questioned; and after many attempts at evasion, he said that Clarke was murdered by Eugene Aram, and that his body was buried in St Robert's Cave, but that the head lay further to the right in the turn near the entrance of the cavern than the spot where the skeleton produced was found. Search was immediately made, and a skeleton was found in a situation corresponding exactly with that which had been pointed out. In consequence of this confession an inquiry was immediately set on foot for Aram, and after a considerable time he was discovered, occupying the situation of usher in a school at Lynn, in Norfolk.

He was immediately apprehended and conveyed in custody to York Castle; and on the 13th of August, 1759, he was brought to trial at the assizes before Mr Justice Noel. The testimony of Houseman to the facts which we have described, and of the other witnesses whose evidence was of a corroborative character, was then adduced; and from the proof which was given, it appeared that the share

of plunder derived by the prisoner did not exceed one hundred and fifty pounds.

Aram's defence was both ingenious and able, and would not have disgraced any of the best lawyers of the day. It is a curious and interesting address, and we subjoin it as affording the best criterion of the talents of the prisoner which can well be adduced. He thus addressed the court:—

“My Lord,—I know not whether it is of right or through some indulgence of your lordship that I am allowed the liberty at this bar, and at this time, to attempt a defence, incapable and uninstructed as I am to speak; since, while I see so many eyes upon me, so numerous and awful a concourse fixed with attention and filled with I know not what expectancy, I labour not with guilt, my lord, but with perplexity; for having never seen a court but this, being wholly unacquainted with law, the customs of the bar, and all judiciary proceedings, I fear I shall be so little capable of speaking with propriety in this place, that it exceeds my hope if I shall be able to speak at all.

“I have heard, my lord, the indictment read, wherein I find myself charged with the highest crime, with an enormity I am altogether incapable of; a fact, to the commission of which there goes far more insensibility of heart, more profligacy of morals, than ever fell to my lot; and nothing possibly could have admitted a presumption of this nature but a depravity not inferior to that imputed to me. However, as I stand indicted at your lordship's bar, and have heard what is called evidence adduced in support of such a charge, I very humbly solicit your lordship's patience, and beg the hearing of this respectable audience, while I, single and unskilful, destitute of friends and unassisted by counsel, say something, perhaps like argument, in my defence. I shall consume but little of your



lordship's time : what I have to say will be short ; and this brevity, probably, will be the best part of it : however, it is offered with all possible regard and the greatest submission to your lordship's consideration, and that of this honourable court.

“ First, my lord, the whole tenour of my conduct in life contradicts every particular of the indictment : yet had I never said this, did not my present circumstances extort it from me, and seem to make it necessary. Permit me here, my lord, to call upon malignity itself, so long and cruelly busied in this prosecution, to charge upon me any immorality of which prejudice was not the author. No, my lord, I concerted no schemes of fraud, projected no violence, injured no man's person or property. My days were honestly laborious, my nights intensely studious ; and I humbly conceive my notice of this, especially at this time, will not be thought impertinent or unseasonable, but, at least, deserving some attention ; because, my lord, that any person, after a temperate use of life, a series of thinking and acting regularly, and without one single deviation from sobriety, should plunge into the very depth of profligacy precipitately and at once, is altogether improbable and unprecedented, and absolutely inconsistent with the course of things. Mankind is never corrupted at once. Villainy is always progressive, and declines from right, step by step, till every regard of probity is lost, and every sense of all moral obligation totally perishes.

“ Again, my lord, a suspicion of this kind, which nothing but malevolence could entertain and ignorance propagate, is violently opposed by my very situation at that time with respect to health ; for, but a little space before, I had been confined to my bed, and suffered under a very long and severe disorder, and was not able, for half a year together, so much as to walk. The distemper left me indeed,

yet slowly, and in part—but so macerated, so enfeebled, that I was reduced to crutches ; and so far from being well about the time I am charged with this fact, I have never, to this day, perfectly recovered. Could then a person in this condition take anything into his head so unlikely, so extravagant ? I, past the vigour of my age, feeble and valetudinary, with no inducement to engage, no ability to accomplish, no weapon wherewith to perpetrate such a deed, without interest, without power, without motive, without means. Besides, it must needs occur to every one, that an action of this atrocious nature is never heard of, but when its springs are laid open. It appears that it was to support some indolence, or supply some luxury ; to satisfy some avarice, or oblige some malice ; to prevent some real or imaginary want : yet I lay not under the influence of these. Surely, my lord, I may, consistently with both truth and modesty, affirm this much ; and none who have any veracity and knew me, will ever question this.

“ In the second place, the disappearance of Clarke is suggested as an argument of his being dead ; but the uncertainty of such an inference from that, and the fallibility of all conclusions of such a sort from such a circumstance, are too obvious and too notorious to require instances ; yet superseding many, permit me to produce a very recent one, and that afforded by this Castle.

“ In June, 1757, William Thompson, for all the vigilance of this place, in open daylight and double-ironed, made his escape, and, notwithstanding an immediate inquiry set on foot, the strictest search, and all advertisement was never heard of since. If, then, Thompson got off unseen, through all these difficulties, how very easy it was for Clarke, when none of them opposed him ! But what would be thought of a prosecution commenced against anyone seen last with Thompson ?

“ Permit me next, my lord, to observe a little upon the bones which have been discovered. It is said (which perhaps is saying very far) that these are the skeleton of a man. It is possible, indeed, it may; but is there any certain known criterion which incontestably distinguishes the sex in human bones? Let it be considered, my lord, whether the ascertaining of this point ought not to precede any attempt to identify them.

“ The place of their depositum, too, claims much more attention than is commonly bestowed upon it; for of all places in the world, none could have mentioned any one wherein there was greater certainty of finding human bones than a hermitage, except he should point out a churchyard; hermitages, in time past, being not only places of religious retirement, but of burial too: and it has scarce or never been heard of, but that every cell now known contains or contained these relics of humanity, some mutilated and some entire. I do not inform, but give me leave to remind your lordship, that here sat solitary Sanctity, and here the hermit or the anchoress hoped that repose for their bones when dead they here enjoyed when living.

“ All the while, my lord, I am sensible this is known to your lordship, and many in this Court, better than to me; but it seems necessary to my case that others, who have not at all, perhaps, adverted to things of this nature, and may have concern in my trial, should be made acquainted with it. Suffer me then, my lord, to produce a few of many evidences that these cells were used as depositories of the dead, and to enumerate a few in which human bones have been found, as it happened in this question; lest, to some, that accident might seem extraordinary, and, consequently, occasion prejudice.

“ 1. The bones, as was supposed, of the Saxon



saint, Dubritius, were discovered buried in his cell at Guy's Cliff, near Warwick ; as appears from the authority of Sir William Dugdale.

" 2. The bones thought to be those of the anchoress Rosia were but lately discovered in a cell at Royston, entire, fair, and undecayed, though they must have lain interred for several centuries ; as is proved by Dr. Stukely.

" 3. But my own country—nay, almost this neighbourhood—supplies another instance ; for in January, 1747, were found, by Mr. Stovin, accompanied by a reverend gentleman, the bones, in part, of some recluse, in the cell at Lindholm, near Hatfield. They were believed to be those of William of Lindholm, a hermit, who had long made this cave his habitation.

" 4. In February, 1744, part of Woburn Abbey being pulled down, a large portion of a corpse appeared, even with the flesh on, and which bore cutting with a knife ; though it is certain this had lain above two hundred years, and how much longer is doubtful ; for this abbey was founded in 1145, and dissolved in 1538 or 1539.

" What would have been said, what believed, if this had been an accident to the bones in question ?

" Farther, my lord :—It is not yet out of living memory that at a little distance from Knaresborough, in a field, part of the manor of the worthy and patriot baronet who does that borough the honour to represent it in parliament, were found, in digging for gravel, not one human skeleton only, but five or six, deposited side by side, with each an urn placed at its head, as your lordship knows was usual in ancient interments.

" About the same time, and in another field, almost close to this borough, was discovered also, in searching for gravel, another human skeleton ; but the piety of the same worthy gentleman ordered

both pits to be filled up again, commendably unwilling to disturb the dead.

“ Is the invention of these bones forgotten, then, or industriously concealed, that the discovery of those in question may appear the more singular and extraordinary ? Whereas, in fact, there is nothing extraordinary in it. My lord, almost every place conceals such remains. In fields, in hills, in highway sides, in commons, lie frequent and unsuspected bones ; and our present allotments for rest for the departed are but of some centuries.

“ Another particular seems to claim not a little of your lordship’s notice, and that of the gentlemen of the jury ; which is, that perhaps no example occurs of more than one skeleton being found in one cell : and in the cell in question was found but one ; agreeable, in this, to the peculiarity of every other known cell in Britain. Not the invention of one skeleton, but of two, would have appeared suspicious and uncommon. But it seems another skeleton has been discovered by some labourer, which was full as confidently averred to be Clarke’s as this. My lord, must some of the living, if it promotes some interest, be made answerable for all the bones that earth has concealed and chance exposed ? and might not a place where bones lay be mentioned by a person by chance as well as found by a labourer by chance ? or is it more criminal accidentally to name where bones lie than accidentally to find where they lie ?

“ Here too is a human skull produced, which is fractured ; but was this the cause, or was it the consequence, of death ? was it owing to violence, or was it the effect of natural decay ? If it was violence, was that violence before or after death ? My lord, in May, 1732, the remains of William, Lord Archbishop of this province, were taken up, by permission, in this cathedral, and the bones of

the skull were found broken ; yet certainly he died by no violence offered to him alive that could occasion that fracture there.

“ Let it be considered, my lord, that, upon the dissolution of religious houses and the commencement of the Reformation, the ravages of those times affected both the living and the dead. In search after imaginary treasures, coffins were broken up, graves and vaults dug open, monuments ransacked, and shrines demolished ; and it ceased about the beginning of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. I entreat your lordship, suffer not the violence, the depredations, and the iniquities of those times, to be imputed to this.

“ Moreover, what gentleman here is ignorant that Knaresborough had a castle, which, though now a ruin, was once considerable both for its strength and garrison ? All know it was vigorously besieged by the arms of the parliament ; at which siege, in sallies, conflicts, flights, pursuits, many fell in all the places round it, and, where they fell, were buried ; for every place, my lord, is burial-earth in war ; and many, questionless, of these rest unknown, whose bones futurity shall discover.

“ I hope, with all imaginable submission, that what has been said will not be thought impertinent to this indictment ; and that it will be far from the wisdom, the learning, and the integrity of the place, to impute to the living what zeal in its fury may have done—what nature may have taken off, and piety interred—or what war alone may have destroyed, alone deposited.

“ As to the circumstances that have been raked together, I have nothing to observe but that all circumstances whatever are precarious, and have been but too frequently found lamentably fallible ; even the strongest have failed. They may rise to the utmost degree of probability, yet they are but



probability still. Why need I name to your lordship the two Harrisons recorded by Dr. Howel, who both suffered upon circumstances because of the sudden disappearance of their lodger, who was in credit, had contracted debts, borrowed money, and went off unseen, and returned a great many years after their execution? Why name the intricate affair of Jacques de Moulin, under King Charles II related by a gentleman who was counsel for the crown? And why the unhappy Coleman, who suffered innocently, though convicted upon positive evidence; and whose children perished for want, because the world uncharitably believed the father guilty? Why mention the perjury of Smith, incautiously admitted king's evidence; who, to screen himself, equally accused Faircloth and Loveday of the murder of Dun; the first of whom, in 1749, was executed at Winchester; and Loveday was about to suffer at Reading, had not Smith been proved perjured, to the satisfaction of the Court, by the governor of Gosport hospital?

“Now, my lord, having endeavoured to show that the whole of this process is altogether repugnant to every part of my life; that it is inconsistent with my condition of health about that time; that no rational inference can be drawn that a person is dead who suddenly disappears; that hermitages are the constant depositories of the bones of a recluse; that the proofs of this are well authenticated; that the revolutions in religion, or the fortunes of war, have mangled or buried the dead;—the conclusion remains, perhaps, no less reasonable than impatiently wished for. I, at last, after a year's confinement, equal to either fortune, put myself upon the justice, the candour, and the humanity of your lordship; and upon yours, my countrymen, gentlemen of the jury.”

The delivery of this address created a very

considerable impression in court; but the learned judge having calmly and with great perspicuity summed up the evidence which had been produced, and having observed upon the prisoner's defence, which he had declared to be one of the most ingenious pieces of reasoning that had ever fallen under his notice, the jury, with little hesitation, returned a verdict of Guilty. Sentence of death was then passed upon the prisoner, who received the intimation of his fate with becoming resignation. After his conviction, he confessed the justice of his sentence to two clergymen who were directed to attend him—a sufficient proof of the fruitlessness of the efforts to prove him innocent, which the morbid sentimentality of late writers has induced them to attempt. Upon an inquiry being made of him as to his reason for committing the crime, he declared that he had reason to suspect Clarke of having had unlawful intercourse with his wife; and that at the time of his committing the murder he had thought that he was acting rightly, but that he had since thought that his crime could not be justified or excused. In the hopes of avoiding the ignominious death which he was doomed to suffer, on the night before his execution he attempted to commit suicide by cutting his arm in two places with a razor, which he had concealed for that purpose. This attempt was not discovered until the morning, when the jailor came to lead him forth to the place of execution, and he was then found almost expiring from the loss of blood. A surgeon was immediately sent for, who found that he had wounded himself severely on the left arm, above the elbow and near the wrist, but he had missed the artery, and his life was prolonged only in order that it might be taken away on the scaffold. When he was placed on the drop, he was perfectly sensible, but was too weak to be able to join in

devotion with the clergyman who attended him.

He was executed at York on the 16th August, 1759; and his body was afterwards hung in chains in Knaresborough Forest.

The following papers were afterwards found in his handwriting on the table in his cell. The first contained reasons for his attempt upon his life, and was as follows:—"What am I better than my fathers? To die is natural and necessary. Perfectly sensible of this, I fear no more to die than I did to be born. But the manner of it is something which should, in my opinion, be decent and manly. I think I have regarded both these points. Certainly no man has a better right to dispose of a man's life than himself; and he, not others, should determine how. As for any indignities offered to my body, or silly reflections on my faith and morals, they are, as they always were, things indifferent to me. I think, though contrary to the common way of thinking, I wrong no man by this, and hope it is not offensive to that Eternal Being that formed me and the world: and as by this I injure no man, no man can be reasonably offended. I solicitously recommend myself to that Eternal and Almighty Being, *the God of Nature*, if I have done amiss. But perhaps I have not; and I hope this thing will never be imputed to me. Though I am now stained by malevolence and suffer by prejudice, I hope to rise fair and unblemished. My life was not polluted, my morals irreproachable, and my opinions orthodox. I slept sound till three o'clock, awaked, and then writ these lines—

Come, pleasing rest! eternal slumbers, fall!  
 Seal mine, that once must seal the eyes of all.  
 Calm and composed my soul her journey takes.  
 No guilt that troubles; and no heart that aches.  
 Adieu, thou sun! All bright, like her, arise!  
 Adieu, fair friends, and all that's good and wise!"

The second was in the form of a letter, addressed to



a former companion, and was in the following terms:

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—Before this reaches you, I shall be no more a living man in this world, though at present in perfect bodily health: but who can describe the horrors of mind which I suffer at this instant? Guilt—the guilt of blood shed without any provocation, without any cause but that of filthy lucre—pierces my conscience with wounds that give the most poignant pains! ’Tis true the consciousness of my horrid guilt has given me frequent interruptions in the midst of my business or pleasures; but yet I have found means to stifle its clamours, and contrived a momentary remedy for the disturbance it gave me by applying to the bottle or the bowl, or diversions, or company, or business; sometimes one, and sometimes the other, as opportunity offered: but now all these, and all other amusements, are at an end, and I am left forlorn, helpless, and destitute of every comfort; for I have nothing now in view but the certain destruction both of my soul and body. My conscience will now no longer suffer itself to be hoodwinked or browbeat: it has now got the mastery; it is my accuser, judge, and executioner: and the sentence it pronounceth against me is more dreadful than I heard from the bench, which only condemned my body to the pains of death, which are soon over; but conscience tells me plainly that she will summon me before another tribunal, where I shall have neither power nor means to stifle the evidence she will there bring against me; and that the sentence which will then be pronounced will not only be irreversible, but will condemn my soul to torments that will know no end.

“Oh! had I but harkened to the advice which dear-bought experience has enabled me to give, I should not now have been plunged into that dreadful gulf of despair which I find it impossible to

extricate myself from ; and therefore my soul is filled with horror inconceivable. I see both God and man my enemies, and in a few hours shall be exposed a public spectacle for the world to gaze at. Can you conceive any condition more horrible than mine ? O, no ! it cannot be ! I am determined, therefore, to put a short end to trouble I am no longer able to bear, and prevent the executioner by doing his business with my own hand, and shall by this means at least prevent the shame and disgrace of a public exposure, and leave the care of my soul in the hands of eternal mercy. Wishing you all health, happiness, and prosperity, I am, to the last moment of my life, yours, with the sincerest regard,

“EUGENE ARAM.”

It is impossible to view the circumstances of this remarkable case, without being struck with the extraordinary conduct of Aram. It is most singular that a man of his talents and mind should have leagued himself with a person like Houseman, who appears to have been utterly uneducated, in the commission of a murder, and with the hope only of gain ; for whatever his declarations after his conviction may have been, as to his object being revenge only for the supposed injury which had been done him by his victim in the seduction of his wife, his ready acquiescence in the plot with another, and his willing acceptance of the plunder which was obtained, distinctly show that that was not the only end which he sought to attain. If, indeed, his feelings were outraged, as he suggested, he would have selected some other mode of obtaining that satisfaction to which the injury alleged would have entitled him ; and it is hardly to be supposed that he would have obtained the assistance of another to secure the object which he had in view, more particularly when it appears that it was he who absolutely committed the foul act, without the

immediate aid of Houseman,—a circumstance which clearly exemplifies the power which he possessed to dispose of his victim, and which would seem to show a desire on his part only to obtain the participation of another in a preconceived act, anticipating doubtless that some aid would be necessary in appropriating and disposing of the property which might be procured from the deceased, and also that some advice would be requisite in the event of suspicion attaching to him. But while these circumstances cannot but surprise us, how much more astonishing is the Divine power of Providence, which disclosed to human eyes, after so long a lapse of time, such evidence as in the result proved the commission of the crime, and which secured the seizure of the criminal, who had up to that time remained unsuspected, and who even then was living in fancied security, free from all fear of discovery and apprehension! It is said that

“—Murder! though it have no tongue, will speak  
With most miraculous organ:”

and how truly is this observation of the most wonderful of poets exemplified by nearly every page of these records of crime!



## LAURENCE, EARL FERRERS

EXECUTED FOR MURDER

LAURENCE, Earl Ferrers, was a man of singular and most unhappy disposition. Descendant of an ancient and noble family, he was doomed to expiate a crime, of which he had been guilty, at Tyburn.

It would appear that the royal blood of the Plantagenets flowed in his veins, and the earl gained his title in the following manner :—The second baronet of the family, Sir Henry Shirley, married a daughter of the celebrated Earl of Essex, who was beheaded in the reign of Queen Elizabeth ; and his son, Sir Robert Shirley, died in the Tower, where he was confined during the Protectorate, for his attachment to the cause of the Stuarts. Upon the Restoration, the second son of Sir Robert succeeded to the title and estates ; and Charles II, anxious to cement the bonds which attached his friends to him, summoned him to the Upper House of Parliament by the title of Lord Ferrers of Chartley, as the descendant of one of the co-heiresses of the Earl of Essex ; the title, which had existed since the reign of Edward III, having been in abeyance since the death of that unfortunate nobleman. In the year 1711, Robert, Lord Ferrers, was created by Queen Anne, Viscount Tamworth and Earl Ferrers ; and it appears that although the estates of the family were very great, they were vastly diminished by the provisions which the Earl thought proper to make for his numerous progeny, consisting of fifteen sons and twelve daughters, born to him by his two wives. At the death of the first earl, his title descended to his second son ; but he dying without

issue, it went in succession to the ninth son, who was childless, and the tenth son, who was the father of the earl, Laurence, the subject of the present sketch.

This nobleman was united in the year 1752 to the youngest daughter of Sir William Meredith; but although his general conduct when sober was not such as to be remarkable, yet his faculties were so much impaired by drink, that when under the influence of intoxication, he acted with all the wildness and brutality of a madman. For a time his wife perceived nothing which induced her to repent the step she had taken in being united to him; but he subsequently behaved to her with such unwarrantable cruelty, that she was compelled to quit his protection, and rejoining her father's family, to apply to Parliament for redress. An act was in consequence passed, allowing her a separate maintenance to be raised out of her husband's estate; and trustees being appointed, the unfortunate Mr Johnson, who fell a sacrifice to the ungovernable passions of Lord Ferrers, having been bred up in the family from his youth, and being distinguished for the regular manner in which he kept his accounts, and his fidelity as a steward, was proposed as receiver of the rents for her use. He at first declined the office; but subsequently, at the desire of the Earl himself, he consented to act, and continued in this employment for a considerable time.

His lordship at this time lived at Stanton, a seat about two miles from Ashby de la Zouch, in Leicestershire; and his family consisted of Mrs Clifford, a lady who lived with him, and her four natural daughters, besides five men-servants, exclusive of an old man and a boy, and three maids.

Mr Johnson lived at the house belonging to the farm, which he held under his lordship, called The

Lount, about half a mile distant from Stanton. It appears that it was his custom to visit his noble master occasionally, to settle the accounts which were placed under his care ; but his lordship gradually conceived a dislike for him, grounded upon the prejudice raised in his mind on account of his being the receiver of the countess's portion, and charged him with having combined with the trustees to prevent his receiving a coal contract. From this time he spoke of him in opprobrious terms, and said he had conspired with his enemies to injure him, and that he was a villain ; and with these sentiments he gave him warning to quit an advantageous farm which he held under his lordship. Finding, however, that the trustees under the act of separation had already granted him a lease of it, it having been promised to him by the earl or his relations, he was disappointed, and probably from that time he meditated a more cruel revenge.

The circumstances immediately attending the transaction, which terminated in the death of Johnson, are as follow :—

On Sunday, the 13th of January, 1760, my lord went to The Lount, and after some discourse with Mr Johnson, ordered him to come to him at Stanton on the Friday following, the 18th, at three o'clock in the afternoon. His lordship's usual dinner-hour was two o'clock ; and soon after that meal was disposed of, on the Friday, he went to Mrs Clifford, who was in the still-house, and desired her to take the children for a walk. She accordingly prepared herself and her daughters, and with the permission of the earl went to her father's, at a short distance, being directed to return at half-past five. The men-servants were next despatched on errands by their master, who was thus left in the house with the three females only. In a short time afterwards Mr Johnson came according to his appointment, and



was admitted by one of the maid-servants, named Elizabeth Burgeland. He proceeded at once to his lordship's apartment, but was desired to wait in the still-house ; and then, after the expiration of about ten minutes, the earl calling him into his own room, went in with him and locked the door. Being thus together, the earl required him first to settle an account, and then charging him with the villainy which he attributed to him, ordered him to kneel down. The unfortunate man went down on one knee ; upon which the earl, in a tone of voice loud enough to be heard by the maid-servants without, cried, " Down on your other knee ; declare that you have acted against Lord Ferrers ; your time is come—you must die : " and then suddenly drawing a pistol from his pocket, which was loaded, he presented it and immediately fired. The ball entered the body of the unfortunate man ; but he rose up, and entreated that no further violence might be done him ; and the female servants at that time coming to the door, being alarmed by the report, his lordship quitted the room. A messenger was immediately despatched for Mr Kirkland, a surgeon, who lived at Ashby de la Zouch ; and Johnson being put to bed, his lordship went to him and asked him how he felt ? He answered that he was dying, and desired that his family might be sent for. Miss Johnson soon after arrived, and Lord Ferrers immediately followed her into the room where her father lay. He then pulled down the clothes, and applied a pledget, dipped in arquebusade water, to the wound, and soon after left him.

From this time it appears that his lordship applied himself to his favourite amusement, drinking, until he became exceedingly violent (for at the time of the commission of the murder he is reported to have been sober), and on the arrival of Mr Kirkland he told him he had shot Johnson, but

believed he was more frightened than hurt ; that he had intended to shoot him dead, for that he was a villain and deserved to die ; “ but,” said he, “ now I have spared his life, I desire you would do what you can for him.” His lordship at the same time desired that he would not suffer him to be seized, and declared, that if any one should attempt it, he would shoot him. Mr Kirkland, who wisely determined to say whatever might keep Lord Ferrers from any further outrages, told him that he should not be seized, and directly went to the wounded man.

The patient complained of a violent pain in his bowels ; and Mr Kirkland preparing to search the wound, my lord informed him of the direction of it, by showing him how he held the pistol when he fired it. Mr Kirkland found the ball had lodged in the body ; at which his lordship expressed great surprise, declaring that he had tried that pistol a few days before, and that it then carried a ball through a deal board near an inch and a half thick. Mr Kirkland then went downstairs to prepare some dressings, and my lord soon after left the room. From this time, in proportion as the liquor which he continued to drink took effect, his passions became more tumultuous, and the transient fit of compassion, mixed with fear for himself, which had excited him, gave way to starts of rage and the predominance of malice. He went up into the room where Johnson was dying, and pulled him by the wig, calling him villain, and threatening to shoot him through the head ; and the last time he went to him he was with great difficulty prevented from tearing the clothes off the bed, that he might strike him.

A proposal was made to him in the evening by Mrs Clifford, that Mr Johnson should be removed to his own house ; but he replied, “ He shall not be removed ; I will keep him here to plague the villain.” He afterwards spoke to Miss Johnson

about her father, and told her that if he died, he would take care of her and of the family, provided they did not prosecute.

When his lordship went to bed, which was between eleven and twelve, he told Mr Kirkland that he knew he could, if he would, set the affair in such a light as to prevent his being seized, desiring that he might see him before he went away in the morning, and declaring that he would rise at any hour.

Mr Kirkland, however, was very solicitous to get Mr Johnson removed ; and as soon as the earl was gone, he set about carrying his object into effect. He in consequence went to Lount, and having fitted up an easy-chair with poles, by way of a sedan, and procured a guard, he returned at about two o'clock, and carried Mr Johnson to his house, where he expired at about nine o'clock on the following morning.

The neighbours now began to take measures to secure the murderer, and a few of them having armed themselves, set out for Stanton ; and as they entered the yard, they saw his lordship, partly undressed, going towards the stable, as if to take out a horse. One of them, named Springthorpe, then advancing towards his lordship with a pistol in his hand, required him to surrender ; but the latter, putting his hand towards his pocket, his assailant, imagining that he was feeling for some weapon of offence, stopped short and allowed him to escape into the house. A great concourse of people had by this time come to the spot, and they cried out loudly that the earl should come forth. Two hours elapsed, however, before anything was seen of him, and then he came to the garret window and called out, "How is Johnson ?" He was answered that he was dead ; but he said it was a lie, and desired that the people should disperse ; but then he gave orders that they should be let in and be furnished with victuals and drink, and finally he



went away from the window swearing that no man should take him. The mob still remained on the spot, and in about two hours the earl was descried by a collier, named Curtis, walking on the bowling-green, armed with a blunderbuss, a brace of pistols, and a dagger. Curtis, however, so far from being intimidated by his bold appearance, walked up to him ; and his lordship, struck with the resolution he displayed, immediately surrendered himself, and gave up his arms, but directly afterwards declared that he had killed the villain, and gloried in the act. He was instantly conveyed in custody to a public-house at Ashby, kept by a man named Kinsey ; and a coroner's jury having brought in a verdict of wilful murder against him, he was on the following Monday committed to the custody of the keeper of the jail at Leicester. Being entitled, however, by his rank to be tried before his peers, he was in about a fortnight afterwards conveyed to London, in his landau, drawn by six horses, under a strong guard ; and being carried before the House of Lords, he was committed to the custody of the Black Rod, and ordered to the Tower, where he arrived at about six o'clock in the evening of the 14th February. He is reported to have behaved, during the whole journey and at his commitment, with great calmness and propriety. He was confined in the Round Tower, near the drawbridge : two wardens were constantly in the room with him, and one at the door ; two sentinels were posted at the bottom of the stairs, and one upon the drawbridge, with their bayonets fixed ; and from this time the gates were ordered to be shut an hour sooner than usual.

During his confinement he was moderate both in eating and drinking ; his breakfast was a half-pint basin of tea, with a small spoonful of brandy in it, and a muffin ; with his dinner he generally drank a

pint of wine and a pint of water, and another pint of each with his supper. In general his behaviour was decent and quiet, except that he would sometimes suddenly start, tear open his waistcoat, and use other gestures, which showed that his mind was disturbed.

Mrs Clifford and the four young ladies, who had come up with him from Leicestershire, took a lodging in Tower-street, and for some time a servant was continually passing with letters between them: but afterwards this correspondence was permitted only once a day.

Mrs Clifford came three times to the Tower to see him, but was not admitted; but his children were suffered to be with him some time.

On the 16th of April, having been a prisoner in the Tower two months and two days, he was brought to his trial, which continued till the 18th, before the House of Lords, assembled for that purpose; Lord Henley, keeper of the great seal, having been created lord high steward upon the occasion.

The murder was easily proved to have been committed in the manner we have described; and his lordship then proceeded to enter upon his defence.

He called several witnesses, the object of whose testimony was to show that the earl was not of sound mind, but none of them proved such an insanity as made him not accountable for his conduct. His lordship managed his defence himself, in such a manner as showed an uncommon understanding; he mentioned the fact of his being reduced to the necessity of attempting to prove himself a lunatic, that he might not be deemed a murderer, with the most delicate and affecting sensibility; and, when he found that his plea could not avail him, he confessed that he made it only to gratify his friends; that he was always averse to it himself; and that it had prevented what he

had proposed, and what perhaps might have taken off the malignity at least of the accusation.

The peers having in the usual form delivered their verdict of Guilty, his lordship received sentence to be hanged on Monday, the 21st of April, and then to be anatomized ; but, in consideration of his rank, the execution of this sentence was respited till Monday, the 5th of May.

During this interval he made a will, by which he left one thousand three hundred pounds to Mr Johnson's children ; one thousand pounds to each of his four natural daughters ; and sixty pounds a year to Mrs Clifford for her life ; but this disposition of his property being made after his conviction, was not valid ; although it was said that the same, or nearly the same provision was afterwards made for the parties named.

In the mean time a scaffold was erected under the gallows at Tyburn, and part of it, about a yard square, was raised about eighteen inches above the rest of the floor, with a contrivance to sink down upon a signal given, in accordance with the plan now invariably adopted ; the whole being covered with black baize.

On the morning of the 5th of May, at about nine o'clock, his lordship's body was demanded of the keeper of the Tower, by the sheriffs of London and Middlesex, and his lordship being informed of it, sent a message to the sheriffs requesting that he might be permitted to be conveyed to the scaffold in his own landau, in preference to the mourning-coach which was provided for him. This being granted, his landau, drawn by six horses, immediately drew up, and he entered it, accompanied by Mr Humphries, the chaplain of the Tower, who had been admitted to him on that morning for the first time. On the carriage reaching the outer gate, the earl was delivered up to the sheriffs, and Mr



Sheriff Vaillant entered the vehicle with him, expressing his concern at having so melancholy a duty to perform ; but his lordship said “ he was much obliged to him, and took it kindly that he accompanied him.” The earl was attired in a white suit, richly embroidered with silver ; and when he put it on he said, “ This is the suit in which I was married, and in which I will die.” The procession being now formed, moved forward slowly, the landau being preceded by a considerable body of horse grenadiers, and by a carriage containing Mr Sheriff Errington, and his under sheriff, Mr Jackson, and being followed by the carriage of Mr Sheriff Vaillant, containing Mr Nichols, his under-sheriff, a mourning-coach and six, containing some of his lordship’s friends, a hearse and six for the conveyance of his body to Surgeons’ Hall after execution, and another body of military. The pace at which they proceeded, in consequence of the density of the mob, was so slow, that his lordship was two hours and three quarters in his landau, but during that time he appeared perfectly easy and composed, though he often expressed his anxiety to have the whole affair over, saying “ that the apparatus of death, and the passing through such crowds, were worse than death itself,” and “ that he supposed so large a mob had been collected because the people had never seen a lord hanged before.” He told the sheriff that “ he had written to the king to beg that he might suffer where his ancestor, the Earl of Essex, had been executed ; and that he was in the greater hopes of obtaining that favour, as he had the honour of quartering part of the same arms, and of being allied to his majesty ; but that he had refused, and he thought it hard that he must die at the place appointed for the execution of common felons.”

Mr Humphries took occasion to observe, that the

world would naturally be very inquisitive concerning the religion his lordship professed, and asked him if he chose to say anything upon that subject ; and his lordship answered that he did not think himself accountable to the world for his sentiments on religion ; but that he had always believed in and adored one God, the maker of all things ; that whatever his notions were, he had never propagated them, or endeavoured to gain any persons over to his persuasion ; that all countries and nations had a form of religion by which the people were governed, and that he looked upon any one who disturbed them in it as an enemy to society. That he blamed very much my Lord Bolingbroke for permitting his sentiments on religion to be published to the world. That he never could believe what some sectaries teach, that faith alone will save mankind ; so that if a man, just before he dies, should say only “ I believe,” *that* alone will save him.

As to the crime for which he suffered, he declared “ that he was under particular circumstances—that he had met with so many crosses and vexations, he scarce knew what he did : ” and he most solemnly protested “ that he had not the least malice against Mr Johnson.”

When his lordship had got to that part of Holborn which is near Drury-lane, he said “ he was thirsty, and should be glad of a glass of wine and water ; ” upon which the sheriffs remonstrating to him, “ that a stop for that purpose would necessarily draw a greater crowd about him, which might possibly disturb and incommode him, yet, if his lordship still desired it, it should be done,” he most readily answered, “ That’s true—I say no more—let us by no means stop.”

When they approached near the place of execution, his lordship, pointing to Mrs Clifford, told the sheriff “ that there was a person waiting in a coach

near there, for whom he had a very sincere regard, and of whom he should be glad to take his leave before he died." The sheriff answered that, "if his lordship insisted upon it, it should be so; but that he wished his lordship, for his own sake, would decline it, lest the sight of a person, for whom he had such a regard, should unman him, and disarm him of the fortitude he possessed." His lordship, without the least hesitation, replied, "Sir, if you think I am wrong, I submit:" and upon the sheriff telling his lordship that if he had anything to deliver to the individual referred to, or any one else, he would faithfully do it, his lordship delivered to him a pocket-book, in which were a bank-note and a ring, and a purse with some guineas, which were afterwards handed over to the unhappy woman.

The landau being now advanced to the place of execution, his lordship alighted from it, and ascended the scaffold with the same composure and fortitude of mind he had exhibited from the time he left the Tower. Soon after he mounted the scaffold, Mr Humphries asked his lordship if he chose to say prayers, which he declined; but, upon his asking him "if he did not chose to join with him in the Lord's Prayer," he readily answered "he would, for he always thought it a very fine prayer;" upon which they knelt down together upon two cushions, covered with black baize, and his lordship, with an audible voice, very devoutly repeated the Lord's Prayer, and afterwards, with great energy, ejaculated, "O God, forgive me all my errors—pardon all my sins!"

His lordship, then rising, took his leave of the sheriff and the chaplain; and, after thanking them for their many civilities, presented his watch to Mr Sheriff Vaillant, of which he desired his acceptance; and requested that his body might be buried at Breden or Stanton, in Leicestershire.



The executioner now proceeded to do his duty, to which his lordship, with great resignation, submitted. His neckcloth being taken off, a white cap, which he had brought in his pocket, being put upon his head, his arms secured by a black sash, and the cord put round his neck, he advanced by three steps to the elevated part of the scaffold, and, standing under the cross-beam which went over it, which was also covered with black baize, he asked the executioner "Am I right?" Then the cap was drawn over his face, and, upon a signal given by the sheriff, (for his lordship, upon being before asked, declined to give one himself,) that part upon which he stood instantly sunk down from beneath his feet, and he was launched into eternity, May 5th, 1760.

From the time of his lordship's ascending the scaffold, until his execution, was about eight minutes; during which his countenance did not change, nor his tongue falter.

The accustomed time of one hour being past, the coffin was raised up, with the greatest decency, to receive the body; and, being deposited in the hearse, was conveyed by the sheriffs, with the same procession, to Surgeons' Hall, to undergo the remainder of the sentence. A large incision was then made from the neck to the bottom of the breast, and another across the throat; the lower part of the belly was laid open, and the bowels taken away. It was afterwards publicly exposed to view in a room up one pair of stairs at the Hall; and on the evening of Thursday, the 8th of May, it was delivered to his friends for interment.

The following verse is said to have been found in his apartment:—

"In doubt I lived, in doubt I die,  
Yet stand prepared the vast abyss to try,  
And, undismay'd, expect eternity."

## JOHN WILKES, ESQ.

### CONVICTED OF SEDITION AND BLASPHEMY

THE year 1768 will ever be memorable in the annals of English history on account of the murders and mischief committed by a deluded mob, stimulated by the writings and opposition to the government of John Wilkes, Esq., an alderman of London, and member of parliament for Aylesbury.

The most scandalous and offensive of his writings were in a periodical publication called the "North Briton," No. 45; and a pamphlet entitled "An Essay on Woman." "The North Briton" was of a political nature; the other a piece of obscenity: the one calculated to set the people against the government; the other to corrupt their morals.

Amongst the ministers who found themselves more personally attacked in the "North Briton" was Samuel Martin, Esq., member for Camelford. This gentleman found his character, as secretary to the Treasury, so vilified, that he called the writer to the field. He had before been engaged in a duel with Lord Talbot, and had then escaped unhurt, but Mr Martin shot him; and the wound proved so dangerous that he lay uncertain of recovering during several days, and was confined to his house for some weeks.

His sufferings, however, did not end here, for the attorney-general filed informations against him as author of "The North Briton," No. 45, and the pamphlet entitled "An Essay on Woman." On

these charges he was apprehended ; and his papers having been seized and inspected, he was committed prisoner to the Tower, but was soon admitted to bail. Before his trial came on, Mr Wilkes fled to France, under the pretext of restoring his health, which had suffered from his wound, and the harassing measures taken against him by the secretaries of state, Lord Egremont and Lord Halifax ; and no sooner was he out of the kingdom, than the ministers proceeded to outlawry, dismissed him from his command as colonel of the Buckinghamshire militia, and expelled him from his seat in parliament.

While in Paris, he was challenged to fight by a Captain Forbes, on account of the reflections which he had cast upon the birthplace of the gallant captain, Scotland ; but he declined the invitation, alleging that he had still an affair to settle with Lord Egremont before he could venture to take any other duel upon his hands. The death of that noble lord, however, left him free to fight ; but on his writing to accept the challenge, his antagonist was not to be found. Mr Wilkes subsequently returned to London, and gave notice that he should appear to answer the charges preferred against him on a certain day ; and then having appeared in his place, as an alderman, in Guildhall, on his return, the mob took the horses from his carriage and dragged it to his house, crying, " Wilkes and liberty ! " On the 21st of February, 1764, the trial of Mr Wilkes, upon the accusations alleged against him, came on before Lord Mansfield, and he was found guilty on both charges, subject to arguments upon certain points as to the validity of his apprehension, the seizure of his papers, and the judgment of outlawry which had been obtained against him. The discussions preliminary to these arguments occupied the courts at various times during a space of two



years ; and in the meantime, the popularity of Mr Wilkes and the outrages of the mob increased daily.

At length, on the 27th of April, 1768, Mr Wilkes having been served with a writ of *Capias utlagatum*, was brought to the floor of the Court of King's Bench in the custody of the proper officer, in order that the question of his being admitted to bail might be considered. A long argument took place, but it terminated in favour of the crown, and Mr Wilkes was conveyed to the King's Bench prison. On his way thither the mob seized the coach in which he was carried, and taking the horses from it, dragged him to a public-house in Spitalfields, where they permitted him to alight ; but at about eleven o'clock at night he effected his escape from his over-zealous friends, and proceeding to the prison, immediately surrendered himself into lawful custody. On the following day he was visited by many of his friends ; and a vast mob having collected outside the prison, it was feared that some outrage would be committed. All remained quiet, however, until night, when the rails by which the prison wall was surrounded were pulled up and burned as a bonfire, and the inhabitants of Southwark were compelled to illuminate their houses ; but upon the arrival of a captain's guard of soldiers, the crowd dispersed without doing any further mischief.

On the 28th of April the case of outlawry was determined ; and Mr Serjeant Glynn having appeared on the part of Mr Wilkes, and the Attorney-General for the crown, a learned and lengthy argument was heard, the result of which was a unanimous expression on the part of the court that the outlawry must be reversed. The general warrant on which the accused had been apprehended was next considered and declared illegal ; but the counsel for the crown then immediately moved that judgment might be passed upon Mr Wilkes upon

the several convictions which had taken place. This was answered by a motion on his part in arrest of judgment, and the following Thursday was fixed upon for hearing the point argued.

In the meantime a mob had remained assembled round the prison whom no efforts of the civil force could disperse ; but at length the justices appeared, followed by a troop of soldiers, determined at once to put an end to the alarming nuisance which had so long existed. All attempts to procure the separation of the crowd by fair means having failed, the Riot Act was read ; and this also having no effect, the soldiers were ordered to fire. The command was instantly obeyed, and many persons were killed and dangerously wounded, some of whom were passing at a distance from the scene of confusion.

At length the day arrived on which the last effort was to be made to get rid of the charges against Mr Wilkes ; but the arguments for an arrest of judgment, though carried on with great ingenuity, would not hold, and he was found to have been legally convicted of writing the libels. For that in "The North Briton" he was fined five hundred pounds, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment in the King's Bench prison ; and for the "Essay on Woman" five hundred pounds more, a further imprisonment of twelve months, and to find security for his good behaviour for seven years.

Previously to his imprisonment Mr Wilkes had been elected member of parliament for Middlesex, when the address which he published to his constituents contained the following passages :—"In the whole progress of ministerial vengeance against me for several years, I have shown, to the conviction of all mankind, that my enemies have trampled on the laws, and have been actuated by the spirit of tyranny and arbitrary power.

"The *general warrant* under which I was first

apprehended has been adjudged illegal. The *seizure* of my papers was condemned judicially. The *out-lawry*, so long the topic of violent abuse, is at last declared to have been contrary to law ; and on the ground first taken by my friend, Mr Serjeant Glynn, is formally reversed."

The mob after the election proceeded to the commission of the most violent outrages. They broke the windows of Lord Bute, the prime minister, and of the Mansion House, including even those of the lady mayoress's bed-chamber, and forced the inhabitants of the metropolis to illuminate their houses, crying out "Wilkes and liberty !" and all who refused to echo it back were knocked down.

A stone was thrown by this daring mob at the Polish Count Rawotski, which he dexterously caught in his hand, the windows of his carriage in which he sat being fortunately down ; and his lordship looking out and smiling, he received no other violence.

The outrages of the populace were too many to be enumerated ; several innocent people were killed, and vast numbers wounded. They broke windows without number, destroyed furniture, and even insulted royalty itself.

These disgraceful tumults were not confined to the metropolis ; and the lenity, or, as some did not hesitate to assert, the timidity of the government, spread disaffection into all classes of mechanics, who, thinking the time at hand when they might exact what wages they pleased, perhaps even beyond their masters' profits, struck work.

The sailors, following the example of the landmen, went in a body of many thousands, with drums beating and colours flying, to St James's Palace, and presented a petition to the king, praying a "Relief of Grievances." Two days afterwards they assembled in much greater numbers, and proceeded



as far as Palace Yard, in order to petition Parliament for an increase of wages ; when they were addressed by two gentlemen standing on the top of a hackney-coach, who told them that their petition could not be immediately attended to, but that it would be considered and answered in due time ; whereupon the tars gave three cheers, and for a while dispersed. A short time afterwards, however, they re-assembled at Limehouse, and boarding several outward-bound vessels, seized their crews, pretending that they would not suffer any ships to sail until their wages were increased. The watermen, the Spitalfields weavers, the sawyers, the hatters, and the labouring classes in the country, all combined in the attempt to procure their wages to be raised ; but while in London the confusion was nearly universal, in the country its effects were confined to a few districts, where some interested persons managed to excite the peaceably-disposed people to acts of outrage.

They soon discovered the error into which they had fallen, however ; and a few of them having suffered execution, and others some severe imprisonments, they returned to their duty.

The folly of popular commotion was never better exemplified than in the case of Wilkes, whose patriotism was accidental and mercenary ; for his letters to his daughter clearly show the contempt with which he regarded the enthusiasm in his favour, and the object he had in view in exciting hatred against the government. Many of the deluded people who shouted " Wilkes and liberty ! " were severely injured in the riots ; and others were subsequently punished by the outraged laws of the country. In a short time the commotion subsided, and the author of them sunk into comparative obscurity, in which he continued until his death in 1797, at the age of seventy years.

# THE COUNTESS OF BRISTOL, OTHERWISE THE DUCHESS OF KINGSTON

## CONVICTED OF BIGAMY

FEW females have in their time attracted so large a portion of public attention as this celebrated lady. She was the daughter of Colonel Chudleigh, the descendant of an ancient family in the county of Devon ; but her father dying while she was yet young, her mother was left possessed only of a small estate with which to bring her up, and to fit her for that grade of society in which from her birth she was entitled to move. Being possessed, however, of excellent qualities, she improved the connection which she had among persons of fashion, with a view to the future success in life of her daughter. The latter, meanwhile, as she advanced in years, improved in beauty ; and upon her attaining the age of eighteen was distinguished as well for the loveliness of her person as for the wit and brilliancy of her conversation. Her education had not been neglected ; and, despite the small fortune possessed by her mother, no opportunity was lost by which her mind might be improved ; and a means was about this time afforded for the display of her accomplishments. The father of George the Third held his court at Leicester-house ; and Mr Pulteney, who then blazed as a meteor on the opposition benches in the House of Commons, was honoured with the particular regard of His Royal Highness. Miss Chudleigh had been introduced to

Mr Pulteney; and he had admired her for the beauties of her mind and of her person; and, his sympathies being excited in her behalf, he obtained for her, at the age of eighteen, the appointment of maid of honour to the Princess of Wales. His efforts, however, did not stop at thus elevating her to a situation of the highest honour; but he also endeavoured to improve the cultivation of her understanding by instruction; and to him Miss Chudleigh read, and with him, when separated by distance, she corresponded.

The station to which Miss Chudleigh had been advanced, combined with her numerous personal attractions, produced her many admirers: some with titles, and others in the expectation of them. Among the former was the Duke of Hamilton, whom Miss Gunning had afterwards the good fortune to obtain for a consort. The duke was passionately attached to Miss Chudleigh; and pressed his suit with such ardour as to obtain a solemn engagement on her part, that on his return from a tour, for which he was preparing, she would become his wife. There were reasons why this event should not immediately take place; but that the engagement would be fulfilled at the specified time was considered by both parties as a moral certainty. A mutual pledge was given and accepted; the duke commenced his proposed tour; and the parting condition was, that he should write by every opportunity, and that Miss Chudleigh of course should answer his epistles. Thus the arrangement of Fortune seemed to have united a pair who possibly might have experienced much happiness, for between the duke and Miss Chudleigh there was a strong similarity of disposition; but Fate had not destined them for each other.

Miss Chudleigh had an aunt, whose name was Hanmer: at her house the Hon Mr Hervey, son



of the Earl of Bristol and a captain in the royal navy, was a visitor. To this gentleman Mrs Hanmer became so exceedingly partial, that she favoured views which he entertained towards her niece, and engaged her efforts to effect, if possible, a matrimonial connection. There were two difficulties which would have been insurmountable, had they not been opposed by the fertile genius of a female—Miss Chudleigh disliked Captain Hervey, and she was betrothed to the Duke of Hamilton.

No exertions which could possibly be made were spared to render this latter alliance nugatory; and the wits of this woman were exerted to the utmost to favour the object she had in view. The letters of his grace were intercepted by Mrs Hanmer; and his supposed silence giving offence to her niece, she worked so successfully on her pride as to induce her to abandon all thoughts of her lover, whose passion she had cherished with delight. A conduct the reverse of that imputed to the duke was observed by Captain Hervey: he was all that assiduity could dictate or attention perform. He had daily access to Miss Chudleigh; and each interview was artfully improved by the aunt to the promotion of her own views. The letters of his grace of Hamilton, which regularly arrived, were as regularly suppressed; until, piqued beyond endurance, Miss Chudleigh was prevailed on to accept the hand of Captain Hervey, and by a private marriage, to ensure the participation of his future honours and fortune. The ceremony was performed in a private chapel adjoining the country mansion of Mr Merrill, at Lainston, near Winchester, in Hampshire.

On a review of life, the predominant evil experienced may be easily traced by every reflecting mind to some wilful error or injudicious mistake, operating as a determinate cause, and giving the colour to our fate. This was the case with Miss

Chudleigh ; and the hour at which she became united with Captain Hervey proved to her the origin of every subsequent unhappiness. The conubial rites were attended with unhappy consequences ; and from the night following the day on which the marriage was solemnised, Miss Chudleigh resolved never to have any further connection with her husband. To prevail on him not to claim her as his wife required all the art of which she was mistress ; and the best dissuasive was the loss of her situation as maid of honour, should the marriage become publicly known. The circumstances of Captain Hervey were not in a flourishing condition, and were ill calculated to enable him to ride with a high hand over his wife ; and the fear of the loss of the emoluments of her office operated most powerfully with him to induce him to obey the injunctions which she imposed upon him in this respect. His conduct even now, however, exhibited a strong desire to act with a degree of harshness most unusual so soon after the performance of the marriage ceremony ; and the consequence was that any feelings of respect which his wife may have fancied she entertained for him were soon dispelled. Her own expression subsequently was that " her misery commenced with the arrival of Captain Hervey in England ; and the greatest joy she experienced was on the intelligence of his departure." Her marriage been unknown to mere outward observers, Miss Chudleigh, or Mrs Hervey, a maid in appearance—a wife in disguise—would have been supposed to be placed in a most enviable condition. The attractive centre of the circle in which she moved, the invigorating spirit of the life of the society formed around her, she was universally admired. Her royal mistress smiled upon her ; the friendship of many was at her call ; the admiration of none could be withheld from her : but amidst all her conquests and all

her fancied happiness she wanted that peace of mind which was so necessary to support her against the conflicts which arose in her own breast. Nor was her own heart, that inward monitor, the only source of her trouble. Her husband, quieted for a time, grew obstreperous as he saw the jewel admired by all, which was, he felt, entitled only to his love ; and feeling that he possessed the right to her entire consideration, he resolved to assert its power. In the meantime every art which she possessed had been put into operation to soothe him to continued silence ; but her further endeavours being unsuccessful, she was compelled to grant his request, and to attend an interview which he appointed, at his own house, and to which he enforced obedience by threatening an instant and full disclosure in case of her non-compliance. The meeting was strictly private, all persons being sent from the house with the exception of a black servant ; and on Mrs Hervey's entrance to the apartment in which her husband was seated, his first care was to prevent all intrusion by locking the door. This meeting, like all others between her and her husband, was unfortunate in its effects : the fruit of it was the birth of a boy, whose existence it will be readily supposed she had much difficulty in concealing. Her removal to Brompton for a change of air became requisite during the term of her confinement ; and she returned to Leicester-house, perfectly recovered from her indisposition ; but the infant son soon sinking in the arms of death, left only the tale of its existence to be related.

In the mean time, the sum of her unhappiness had been completed by the return of the Duke of Hamilton. His grace had no sooner arrived in England, than he hastened to pay his adoration at the feet of his idol, and to learn the cause of her silence, when his letters had been regularly



despatched to her. An interview which took place soon set the character of Mrs Hanmer in its true light ; but while Miss Chudleigh was convinced of the imposition which had been practised upon her, she was unable to accept the proffered hand of her illustrious suitor, or to explain the reason for her apparently ungracious rejection of his addresses. The duke, flighty as he was in other respects, in his love for Miss Chudleigh had at least been sincere ; and this strange conduct on the part of his betrothed, followed as it was by a request on her part that he would not again intrude his visits upon her, raised emotions in his mind which can hardly be described. The rejection of his grace was followed by that of several other persons of distinction ; and the mother of Miss Chudleigh, who was quite unaware of her private marriage with Captain Hervey, could not conceal her regret and anger at the supposed folly of her daughter.

It was impossible that these circumstances could long remain concealed from the society in which Miss Chudleigh moved ; and, in order to relieve herself from the embarrassments by which she was surrounded, she determined to travel on the Continent—trusting that time would eradicate the impression of her fickleness which she left behind her, and that change of scene would remove the pain which every day spent in the theatre of her former operations could not fail to sink deeper into her heart. Germany was the place selected by her for her travels ; and she, in turn, visited the chief cities of its principalities. Possessed as she was of introductions of the highest class, she was gratified by obtaining the acquaintance of many crowned heads. Frederic of Prussia conversed and corresponded with her. In the Electress of Saxony she found a friend whose affection for her continued to the latest period of life. The Electress was a

woman of sense, honour, virtue, and religion ; and her letters were replete with kindness. While her hand distributed presents to Miss Chudleigh out of the treasury of abundance, her heart was interested for her happiness. This she afterwards evinced during her prosecution ; for at that time a letter from the electress contained the following passage :—“ You have long experienced my love ; my revenue, my protection, my everything, you may command. Come then, my dear life, to an asylum of peace. Quit a country where, if you are bequeathed a cloak, some pretender may start up, and ruin you by law to prove it not your property. Let me have you at Dresden.”

On her return from the Continent Miss Chudleigh ran over the career of pleasure, enlivened the court circles, and each year became more ingratiated with the mistress whom she served. She was the leader of fashion, played whist with Lord Chesterfield, and revelled with Lady Harrington and Miss Ashe. She was a constant visitant at all public places, and in 1742 appeared at a masked ball in the character of Iphigenia.

Reflection, however, put off for the day, too frequently intruded an unwelcome visit at night. Captain Hervey, like a perturbed spirit, was eternally crossing the path trodden by his wife. If in the rooms at Bath, he was sure to be there. At a rout, ridotto, or ball, this destroyer of her peace embittered every pleasure, and even menaced her with an intimation that he would disclose the marriage to the princess.

Miss Chudleigh, now persuaded of the folly and danger of any longer concealment from her royal mistress, determined that the design, which her husband had formed from a malicious feeling, should be carried out by herself from a principle of rectitude ; and she, in consequence, communicated

to the princess the whole of the circumstances attending her unhappy union. The recital was one which could excite no feeling of disrespect or of anger ; and her royal mistress pitied her, and continued her patronage up to the hour of her death.

At length a stratagem was either suggested, or it occurred to Miss Chudleigh, at once to deprive Captain Hervey of the power to claim her as his wife. The clergyman who had married them was dead. The register-book was in careless hands. A handsome compliment was paid for the inspection ; and while the person, in whose custody it was, listened to an amusing story, Miss Chudleigh tore out the register. Thus imagining the business accomplished, she for a time bade defiance to her husband, whose taste for the softer sex having subsided from some unaccountable cause, afforded Miss Chudleigh a cessation of inquietude.

A change in the circumstances of the captain, however, effected an alteration in the feelings of his wife. His father having died, he succeeded to the title of the Earl of Bristol, and his accession to nobility was not unaccompanied by an increase of fortune. Miss Chudleigh saw that by assuming the title of Countess of Bristol she would probably command increased respect, and would obtain greater power ; and with a degree of unparalleled blindness, she went to the house of Mr Merrill, the clergyman in whose chapel she had been married, to restore those proofs of her union which she had previously taken such pains to destroy. Her ostensible reason was a jaunt out of town ; her real design was to procure, if possible, the insertion of her marriage with Captain Hervey in the book which she had formerly mutilated. With this view she dealt out promises with a liberal hand. The officiating clerk, who was a person of various avocations, was to be promoted to the extent of his



wishes. The book was managed by the lady to her content, and she returned to London, secretly exulting in the excellence and success of her machination. While this was going on, however, her better fate influenced in her favour the heart of a man who was the exemplar of amiability—this was the Duke of Kingston: but, re-married as it were by her own stratagem, the participation of ducal honours became legally impossible. The chains of wedlock, which the lady had been so industrious in assuming or putting off, as seemed most suitable to her views, now became galling in the extreme. Every advice was taken, every means tried, by which her liberation might be obtained; but all the efforts which were made proved useless, and it was found to be necessary to acquiesce in that which could not be opposed successfully or pass unnoticed. The duke's passion, meanwhile, became more ardent and sincere; and, finding the apparent impossibility of a marriage taking place, he for a series of years cohabited with Miss Chudleigh, although with such external observances of decorum, that their intimacy was neither generally remarked nor known.

The disagreeable nature of these proceedings on their parts was, however, felt by both parties, and efforts were again made by means of which a marriage might be solemnised. The Earl of Bristol was sounded; and it was found that, grown weary of a union with a woman whom he now disliked, and whom he never met, he was not unwilling to accept the proposals held out; but upon his learning the design with which a divorce was sought, he declared that he would never consent to it, for that his countess's vanity should not be flattered by her being raised to the rank of a duchess. The negotiations were thus for a time stopped; but afterwards, there being a lady with whom he conceived that he

could make an advantageous match, he listened to the suggestions which were made to him with more complacency, and at length declared that he was ready to adopt any proceedings which should have for their effect the annihilation of the ties by which he was bound to Miss Chudleigh. The civilians were consulted, a jactitation suit was instituted; but the evidence by which the marriage could have been proved was kept back, and the Earl of Bristol failing, as it was intended he should fail, in substantiating the marriage, a decree was made, declaring the claim to be null and unsupported. Legal opinions now only remained to be taken as to the effect of this decree, and the lawyers of the Ecclesiastical Courts, highly tenacious of the rights and jurisdiction of their own judges, declared their opinion to be that the sentence could not be disturbed by the interference of any extrinsic power. In the conviction, therefore, of the most perfect safety, the marriage of the Duke of Kingston with Miss Chudleigh was publicly solemnised. The wedding favours were worn by persons of the highest distinction in the kingdom; and during the life-time of his grace, no attempt was made to dispute the legality of the proceedings. For a few years the duchess figured in the world of gaiety without apprehension or control. She was raised to the pinnacle of her fortune, and she enjoyed that which her later life had been directed to accomplish—the parade of title, but without that honour which integrity of character can alone secure. She was checked in her career of pleasure, however, by the death of her duke. The fortune which his grace possessed, it appears, was not entailed, and it was at his option, therefore, to bequeath it to the duchess or to the heirs of his family, as seemed best to his inclination. His will, excluding from every benefit an elder, and preferring a younger nephew

as the heir in tail, gave rise to the prosecution of the duchess, which ended in the beggary of her prosecutor and her own exile. The demise of the Duke of Kingston was neither sudden nor unexpected. Being attacked with a paralytic affection, he lingered but a short time, which was employed by the duchess in journeying his grace from town to town, under the false idea of prolonging his life by change of air and situation. At last, when real danger seemed to threaten, even in the opinion of the duchess, she despatched one of her swiftest-footed messengers to her solicitor, Mr Field, of the Temple, requiring his immediate attendance. He obeyed the summons, and arriving at the house, the duchess privately imparted her wishes, which were, that he would procure the duke to execute, and be himself a subscribing witness to a will, made without his knowledge, and more to the taste of the duchess than that which had been executed. The difference between these two wills was this:—the duke had bequeathed the income of his estates to his relict during her life, and expressly under condition of her continuing in a state of widowhood. Perfectly satisfied, however, as the duchess seemed with whatever was the inclination of her dearest lord, she could not resist the opportunity of carrying her secret wishes into effect. She did not relish the temple of Hymen being shut against her. Earnestly, therefore, did she press Mr Field to have her own will immediately executed, which left her at liberty to give her hand to the conqueror of her heart; and in her anxiety to have the restraint shaken off, she had nearly deprived herself of every benefit derivable from the demise of the duke. When Mr Field was introduced to his grace, his intellects were perceptibly affected; and, although he knew the friends who approached him, a transient knowledge of their persons was the only



indication of the continuance of his mental powers which he exhibited. Mr Field very properly remonstrated against the impropriety of introducing a will for execution to a man in such a state ; but this occasioned a severe reprehension from the duchess, who reminded him that his business was only to obey the instructions of his employer. Feeling for his professional character, however, he positively refused either to tender the will or to be in any manner concerned in endeavouring to procure its execution ; and with this refusal he quitted the house, the duchess beholding him with an indignant eye as the annoyer of her scheme, when, in fact, by not complying with it, he was rendering her an essential service ; for had the will she proposed been executed, it would most indubitably have been set aside, and the heirs would consequently have excluded the relict from everything, except that to which the right of dower entitled her ; and the marriage being invalidated, the lady in this, as in other respects, would have been ruined by her own stratagem. Soon after the frustration of this attempt the Duke of Kingston expired.

No sooner were the funeral rites performed than the duchess adjusted her affairs, and embarked for the Continent, proposing Rome for her temporary residence. Ganganelli at that time filled the papal chair. From the moderation of his principles, the tolerant spirit which he on every occasion displayed, and the marked attention he bestowed on the English, he acquired the title of the Protestant Pope ; and to such a character the duchess was a welcome visitor. Ganganelli treated her with the utmost civility—gave her, as a sovereign prince, many privileges—and she was lodged in the palace of one of the cardinals. Her vanity being thus gratified, her grace, in return, treated the Romans with a public spectacle. She had built an elegant

pleasure-yacht ; a gentleman who had served in the navy was the commander. Under her orders he sailed for Italy ; and the vessel, at considerable trouble and expense, was conveyed up the Tiber. The sight of an English yacht in this river was one of so unusual a character that it attracted crowds of admirers ; but while all seemed happiness and pleasure where the bark rested quietly on the waters of the river, proceedings were being concocted in London which would effectually put a stop to any momentary sensations of bliss which the duchess might entertain.

Mrs Cradock, who, in the capacity of a domestic, had witnessed the marriage which had been solemnised between her grace and the Earl of Bristol, found herself so reduced in circumstances that she was compelled to apply to Mr Field for assistance. The request was rejected ; and, notwithstanding her assurance that she was perfectly well aware of all the circumstances attending the duchess's marriage, and that she should not hesitate to disclose all she knew in a quarter where she would be liberally paid—namely, to the disappointed relations of the Duke of Kingston—she was set at defiance. Thus refused, starvation stared her in the face ; and, stung by the ingratitude of the duchess's solicitor, she immediately set about the work of ruin which she contemplated. The Duke of Kingston had borne a marked dislike to one of his nephews, Mr Evelyn Meadows, one of the sons of his sister, Lady Frances Pierpoint. This gentleman being excluded from the presumptive heirship, joyfully received the intelligence that a method of revenging himself against the duchess was presented to him. He saw Mrs Cradock ; learned from her the particulars of the statement, which she would be able to make upon oath ; and, being perfectly satisfied of its truth, he preferred a bill of

indictment against the Duchess of Kingston for bigamy, which was duly returned a true bill. Notice was immediately given to Mr Field of the proceedings, and advices were forthwith sent to the duchess to appear and plead to the indictment, to prevent a judgment of outlawry.

The duchess's immediate return to England being thus required, she set about making the necessary preparations for her journey; and as money was one of the commodities requisite to enable her to commence her homeward march, she proceeded to the house of Mr Jenkins, the banker in Rome, in whose hands she had placed security for the advance of all such sums as she might require. The opposition of her enemies, however, had already commenced; they had adopted a line of policy exactly suited to the lady with whom they had to deal. Mr Jenkins was out, and could not be found. She apprised him, by letter, of her intended journey, and her consequent want of money; but still he avoided seeing her. Suspecting the trick, her grace was not to be trifled with, and finding all her efforts fail, she took a pair of pistols in her pocket, and driving to Mr Jenkins's house, once again demanded to be admitted. The customary answer, that Mr Jenkins was out, was given; but the duchess declared that she was determined to wait until she saw him, even if it should not be until a day, month, or year, had elapsed; and she took her seat on the steps of the door, which she kept open with the muzzle of one of her pistols, apparently determined to remain there. She knew that business would compel his return, if he were not already in-doors; and at length, Mr Jenkins, finding further opposition useless, appeared. The nature of her business was soon explained. The conversation was not of the mildest kind. Money was demanded, not asked. A little prevarication



ensued ; but the production of a pistol served as the most powerful mode of reasoning ; and the necessary sum being instantly obtained, the duchess quitted Rome. Her journey was retarded before she reached the Alps ; a violent fever seemed to seize on her vitals : but she recovered, to the astonishment of her attendants. An abscess then formed in her side, which rendering it impossible for her to endure the motion of the carriage, a kind of litter was provided, in which she slowly travelled. In this situation nature was relieved by the breaking of the abscess ; and, after a painfully tedious journey, the duchess reached Calais. At that place she made a pause ; and there it was that her apprehension got the better of her reason. In idea she was fettered and incarcerated in the worst cell of the worst prison in London. She was totally ignorant of the bailable nature of her offence, and therefore expected the utmost that can be imagined. Colonel West, a brother of the late Lord Delaware, whom the duchess had known in England, became her principal associate ; but he was not lawyer enough to satisfy her doubts. By the means of former connections, and through a benevolence in his own nature, the Earl of Mansfield had a private meeting with the duchess ; and the venerable peer conducted himself in a manner which did honour to his heart and character.

Her spirits being soothed by the interview, the duchess embarked for Dover, landed, drove post to Kingston-house, and found friends displaying both zeal and alacrity in her cause. The first measure taken was to have the duchess bailed. This was done before Lord Mansfield ; the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Mountstuart, Mr Glover, and other characters of rank attending. The prosecution and consequent trial of the duchess becoming objects of magnitude, the public curiosity and expectation

were proportionably excited. The duchess had through life distinguished herself as a most eccentric character. Her turn of mind was original, and many of her actions were without a parallel. Even when she moved in the sphere of amusement, it was in a style peculiarly her own. If others invited admiration by a partial display of their charms at a masquerade, she at once threw off the veil, and set censure at defiance. Thus, at midnight assemblies where Bacchus revelled, and the altars of Venus were encircled by the votaries of love, the duchess then Miss Chudleigh, appeared almost in the unadorned simplicity of primitive nature. The dilemma, therefore, into which she was thrown by the pending prosecution, was, to such a character of the most perplexing kind.

She had already in a manner invited the disgrace and she now neglected the means of preventing it. Mrs Cradock, the only existing evidence against her, again personally solicited a maintenance for the remaining years of her life ; and voluntarily offered, in case a stipend should be settled on her, to retire to her native village, and never more intrude. The offer was rejected by the duchess, who would only consent to allow her twenty pounds a year, on condition of her sequestering herself in some place near the Peak of Derbyshire. This the duchess considered as a most liberal offer ; and she expressed her astonishment that it should be rejected.

Under the assurances of her lawyers, the duchess was as quiet as that troublesome monitor, her own heart, would permit her to be ; and reconciled in some measure to the encounter with which she was about to meet, her repose was most painfully disturbed by an adversary, who appeared in a new and most unexpected quarter. This was the celebrated Foote, the actor, who, having mixed in the first circles of fashion, was perfectly acquainted with the

reading transactions of the duchess's life, and had resolved to turn his knowledge to his own advantage. As, in the opinion of Mandeville, private vices are public benefits, so Foote deemed the crimes and vices of individuals lawful game for his wit. On this principle he proceeded with the Duchess of Kingston; and he wrote a piece, founded on her life, called "The Trip to Calais." The scenes were numerous; the character of the duchess admirably drawn; and the effect of the performance of the farce on the stage would have been that which was most congenial to the tastes of the scandal-mongers of the day—namely, to make the duchess ashamed of herself. The real object of Mr. Foote, however, was one of a nature more likely to prove advantageous to himself—it was to obtain money to secure the suppression of the piece; and with this view he contrived to have it communicated to her grace that the Haymarket Theatre would open with an entertainment in which she was taken off to the life. Alarmed at this, she sent for Foote, who attended with the piece in his pocket; but having been desired to read it, he had not gone far before the character of Lady Kitty Crocodile being introduced, the duchess could no longer control her anger, and rising in a violent rage, she exclaimed, "Why, this is scandalous; what a wretch you have made me." Mr. Foote assured her that the character was not intended to "caricature her;"—even in his serious moments being unable to control his desire to pun—for he left her to infer that it was a true picture; and the duchess, having taken a few turns about the room, became more composed, and requested that the piece might be left for her perusal, engaging that it should be returned by the ensuing evening. The actor readily complied, and retired; but the lady being left to consider her own portrait, was so displeased with the likeness, that



she determined, if possible, to prevent its exposure on the stage. The artist had no objection to sell his work, and she was inclined to become the purchaser; but on the former being questioned as to the sum which he should expect for suppressing the piece, he proportioned his expectations to what he deemed the duchess's power of gratifying them, and demanded two thousand guineas, besides a sum to be paid as compensation for the loss of the scenes, which had been painted for the farce, and which were not applicable to any other purpose. The magnitude of the demand, as well it might, staggered the duchess; and having intimated her extreme astonishment at so exorbitant a proposition, she expressed a wish that the sum might be fixed at one within the bounds of moderation and reason. The actor was positive; concluding, that as his was the only article in the market, he might name his own price: but the result was, that by demanding too much, he lost all. A cheque for fourteen hundred pounds was offered; the amount was increased to sixteen hundred pounds, and a draft on Messrs. Drummond's was actually signed; but the obstinacy of the actor was so great, that he refused to abate one guinea from his original demand. The circumstance might at any other time have passed among the indifferent events of the day, and as wholly undeserving of the public notice; but those long connected with the duchess, and in habits of intimacy, felt the attack made on her as directed by a ruffian hand, at a moment when she was least able to make resistance. His grace the Duke of Newcastle was consulted. The chamberlain of the household (the Earl of Hertford) was apprised of the circumstance; and his prohibitory interference was earnestly solicited. He sent for the manuscript copy of "The Trip to Calais," perused, and censured it.

But besides these and other powerful aids, the duchess called in professional advice. The sages of the robe were consulted, and their opinions were that the piece was a malicious libel; and that, should it be represented, a shorthand writer ought to be employed to attend on the night of representation, to minute each offensive passage, as the groundwork of a prosecution. This advice was followed, and Foote was intimidated. He denied having made a demand of two thousand guineas; but the Rev Mr Foster contradicted him in an affidavit. Thus defeated in point of fact, Foote found himself baffled also in point of design. The chamberlain would not permit the piece to be represented.

Foote now had recourse to another expedient: He caused it to be intimated "that it was in his power to publish if not to perform; but were his expenses reimbursed (and the sum which her grace had formerly offered would do the business), he would desist" This being communicated to the duchess, she in this, as in too many cases, asked the opinion of her friends, with a secret determination to follow her own. Foote, finding that she began to yield, pressed his desire incessantly; and she had actually provided bills to the amount of one thousand six hundred pounds, which she would have given him but for the Rev Mr Jackson, who, being asked his opinion of the demand, returned this answer: "Instead of complying with it, your grace should obtain complete evidence of the menace and demand, and then consult your counsel whether a prosecution will not lie for endeavouring to extort money by threats. Your grace must remember the attack on the first Duke of Marlborough by a stranger, who had formed a design either on his purse or his interest, and endeavoured to menace him into a compliance." This answer struck the

Earl of Peterborough and Mr Foster very forcibly, as in perfect coincidence with their own opinions ; and Mr Jackson was then solicited to wait on Mr Foote ; Mr Foster, the chaplain of the duchess, professing himself to be too far advanced in years to enter into the field of literary combat. Mr Jackson consented to be the champion on the following condition : that the duchess would give her honour never to retract her determination, nor to let Foote extort from her a single guinea. Her grace subscribing to this condition, Mr Jackson waited on Mr Foote at his house in Suffolk-street, and intimated to him the resolution to which the duchess had come. The actor, however, still wished to have matters compromised ; and to this end he addressed a letter to the duchess, which began with stating “ that a member of the privy council and a friend of her grace (by whom he meant the Duke of Newcastle) had conversed with him on the subject of the dispute between them ; and that, for himself, he was ready to have everything adjusted.” This letter afforded the duchess a triumph. Every line contained a concession ; and, contrary to the advice of her friends, she insisted upon the publication of the whole correspondence.

This circumstance for a time served to turn the current of attention into a new channel. But while the public notice was withdrawn from her grace, she felt too heavily the necessity which existed to adopt some course to enable her either to evade or meet the impending danger. Her line of procedure was soon determined upon—she affected an earnest desire to have the trial, if possible, accelerated, while in secret she took every means in her power to evade the measures which her opponents had taken against her. Her conduct in other respects appears to have been strangely inconsistent. An



opportunity presented itself which remained only to be embraced to secure her object. It became the subject of a discussion in the House of Lords whether the trial of her grace should not be conducted in Westminster Hall; and the expense which would necessarily be incurred by the country was by many urged as being a burden which ought not to rest upon the public purse. Lord Mansfield, privately desiring to save the duchess from the disgrace and ignominy of a public trial, strove to avail himself of this objection in her favour; and so great had become the differences of opinion entertained upon the subject, that the withdrawal of the prosecution altogether would have been a matter which would have been considered desirable rather than improper. Here then was the critical moment at which the duchess might have determined her future fate. A hint was privately conveyed to her that the sum of ten thousand pounds would satisfy every expectation, and put an end to the prosecution; and doubts being expressed of the sincerity of the proposal, the offer was made in distinct terms. The duchess was entreated by her friends to accept the proposition which was made, and so at once to relieve herself and them from all fear of the consequences which might result to her; but through a fatal mistaken confidence either in the legal construction of her case, or in her own machinations, she refused to accede to the offers which were held out. Resting assured of her acquittal, she resisted every attempt at dissuasion from her purpose of going to trial; and she assumed an air of indifference about the business which but ill accorded with the doubtful nature of her position. She talked of the absolute necessity of setting out for Rome; affected to have some material business to settle with the Pope; and, in consequence, took every means and urged every argument in her

power to procure the speedy termination of the proceedings—as if the regular course of justice had not been swift enough to overtake her. In the midst of her confidence, however, she did not abandon her manœuvring ; but at the very moment when she was petitioning for a speedy trial, she was engaged in a scheme to get rid of the principal witness against her. Mrs Cradock, to whom before she had refused a trifling remuneration, might now have demanded thousands as the price of her evidence. A negotiation was carried on through the medium of a relation of hers, who was a letter-carrier, which had for its object her removal from England ; and an interview was arranged to take place between her and the duchess, at which the latter was to appear disguised, and was to reveal herself only after some conversation, the object of which was that terms might be proposed ; but her grace was duped : for having changed her clothes to those of a man, she waited at the appointed hour and place without seeing either Mrs Cradock or the person who had promised to effect the meeting ; and she afterwards learned that every particular of this business had been communicated to the prosecutors, who instructed the letter-carrier to pretend an acquiescence in the scheme.

Thus baffled in a project which had a plausible appearance of success, the only method left was the best possible arrangement of matters preparatory to the trial. On the 15th day of April, 1766, the business came on in Westminster Hall, when the queen was present, accompanied by the Prince of Wales, princess royal, and others of the royal family. Many foreign ambassadors also attended, as well as several of the nobility. These having taken their seats, the duchess came forward, attended by Mrs Edgerton, Mrs Barrington, and

Miss Chudleigh, three of the ladies of her bed-chamber, and her chaplain, physician, and apothecary; and as she approached the bar she made three reverences, and then dropped on her knees, when the lord high steward said, "Madam, you may rise." Having risen, she courtesied to the lord high steward and the house of peers, and her compliments were returned.

Proclamation being made for silence, the lord high steward mentioned to the prisoner the fatal consequences attending the crime of which she stood indicted, signifying that, however alarming and awful her present circumstances, she might derive great consolation from considering that she was to be tried by the most liberal, candid, and august assembly in the universe.

The duchess then read a paper, setting forth that she was guiltless of the offence alleged against her, and that the agitation of her mind arose, not from the consciousness of guilt, but from the painful circumstance of being called before so awful a tribunal on a criminal accusation. She begged, therefore, that if she was deficient in the observance of any ceremonial points, her failure might not be understood as proceeding from wilful disrespect, but should be attributed to the unfortunate peculiarity of her situation. It was added, that she had travelled from Rome in so dangerous a state of health that it was necessary for her to be conveyed in a litter; and that she was perfectly satisfied that she should have a fair trial, since the determination respecting her cause, on which materially depended her honour and fortune, would proceed from the most unprejudiced and august assembly in the world.

The lord high steward then desired the lady to give attention while she was arraigned on an indictment for bigamy; and proclamation for



silence having been again made, the duchess (who had been permitted to sit) arose, and read a paper, representing to the Court that she was advised by her counsel to plead the sentence of the Ecclesiastical Court in the year 1769 as a bar to her being tried on the present indictment. The lord high steward informed her that she must plead to the indictment; in consequence of which she was arraigned; and being asked by the clerk of the crown whether she was guilty of the felony with which she stood charged, she answered, with great firmness, "Not guilty, my lords." The clerk of the crown then asking her how she would be tried, she said, "By God and my peers;" on which the clerk said, "God send your ladyship a good deliverance."

Four days were occupied in arguments of counsel respecting the admission or rejection of a sentence of the Spiritual Court; but the peers having decided that it could not be admitted, the trial proceeded. The first witness examined was

Anne Cradock, whose testimony was as follows:— I have known her grace the Duchess of Kingston ever since the year 1742, at which time she came on a visit to the house of Mr Merrill, at Lainston, in Hampshire, during the Winchester races. At that time I lived in the service of Mrs Hanmer, Miss Chudleigh's aunt, who was then on a visit at Mr Merrill's, where Mr Hervey and Miss Chudleigh first met, and soon conceived a mutual attachment for each other. They were privately married one evening at about eleven o'clock in Lainston church, in the presence of Mr Mountney, Mrs Hanmer the Rev Mr Ames, the rector, who performed the ceremony, and myself. I was ordered out of the church to entice Mr Merrill's servants out of the way. I saw the bride and bridegroom put to bed together, and Mrs Hanmer obliged them to rise again; they went to bed together the following

night. In a few days Mr Hervey was under the necessity of going to Portsmouth in order to join Sir John Danvers's fleet, in which he was then a lieutenant; and being ordered to call him at five o'clock in the morning, I went into the bedchamber at the appointed hour, and found him and his lady sleeping in bed together. I was unwilling to disturb them, as I thought that the delay of an hour or two would make no difference, but they afterwards parted. My husband, to whom I was not then married, accompanied Mr Hervey in the capacity of servant. When Mr Hervey returned from the Mediterranean, he and his lady lived together, and I then thought that she was pregnant. Some months after, Mr Hervey went again to sea, and during his absence I was informed that the lady was brought to bed; and I was afterwards confirmed in the information by the lady herself, who said that she had a little boy at nurse, whose features greatly resembled those of Mr Hervey.

In answer to questions put by the Duke of Grafton, the witness said that she had never seen the child; that it was dark when the marriage took place in the church, and that Mr Mountney carried a wax light attached to the crown of his hat. Upon being asked by the Earl of Hilsborough whether she had not received a letter containing some offer to induce her to appear now as a witness, she admitted that Mr Fossard of Piccadilly had written to her, offering her a sinecure place on condition of her coming forward to give evidence against her grace, and stating that she might, if she pleased, exhibit the letter to the Earl of Bristol. The cross-examination of the witness on this point was continued during the remainder of the sitting of their lordships; and on the following day (the 20th of April) it was resumed, the Earls of Derby, Hilsborough, and Buckinghamshire questioning her with

considerable acumen. She at length confessed that pecuniary offers had been made to her to induce her to appear, and that she had acceded to the terms proposed.

Mrs Sophia Pettiplace was examined as to the facts deposed to by Mrs Cradock; but she was able to afford no positive information upon the subject. She lived with her grace at the time of the supposed marriage, but was not present at the ceremony, and only believed that the duchess had mentioned the circumstance to her.

Cæsar Hawkins, Esq. deposed that he had been acquainted with the duchess several years, he believed not less than thirty. He had heard of a marriage between Mr Hervey and the lady at the bar, which circumstance was afterwards mentioned to him by both parties, previous to Mr Hervey's last going to sea. By the desire of her grace, he was in the room when the issue of the marriage was born, and once saw the child. He was sent for by Mr Hervey soon after his return from sea, and desired by him to wait upon the lady, with proposals for procuring a divorce, which he accordingly did; when her grace declared herself absolutely determined against listening to such terms; and he knew that many messages passed on the subject. Her grace some time after informed him, at his own house, that she had instituted a jactitation suit against Mr Hervey in Doctors' Commons. On another visit she appeared very grave, and desiring him to retire into another apartment, said she was exceedingly unhappy, in consequence of an oath, which she had long dreaded, having been tendered to her at Doctors' Commons to disavow her marriage, which she would not do for ten thousand worlds. Upon another visit, a short time after, she informed him that a sentence had passed in her favour at Doctors' Commons, which would be



irrevocable unless Mr Hervey pursued certain measures within a limited time, which she did not apprehend he would do. Hereupon he inquired how she got over the oath ; and her reply was, that the circumstance of her marriage was so blended with falsities, that she could easily reconcile the matter to her conscience ; since the ceremony was a business of so scrambling and shabby a nature, that she could as safely swear she was *not* as that she *was* married.

Judith Philips, being called, swore that she was the widow of the Rev Mr Ames ; that she remembered when her late husband performed the marriage ceremony between Mr Hervey and the prisoner ; that she was not present, but derived her information from her husband ; that some time after the marriage the lady desired her to prevail upon her husband to grant a certificate, which she said she believed her husband would not refuse ; that Mr Merrill, who accompanied the lady, advised her to consult his attorney from Worcester ; that in compliance with the attorney's advice, a register-book was purchased, and the marriage inserted therein, with some late burials in the parish. The book was here produced, and the witness swore to the writing of her late husband.

The writing of the Rev Mr Ames was also proved by the Rev Mr Inchin and the Rev Mr Dennis ; and the entry of a caveat to the duke's will was proved by a clerk from Doctors' Commons. The book in which the marriage of the Duke of Kingston with the lady at the bar was registered on the 8th of March, 1769, was produced by the Rev Mr Trebeck, of St Margaret's, Westminster ; and the Rev Mr Samuel Harpur, of the British Museum, swore that he performed the marriage ceremony between the parties on the day mentioned in the books produced by Mr Trebeck.

Monday, the 22nd of April, after the attorney-general had declared the evidence on behalf of the prosecution to be concluded, the lord high steward called upon the prisoner for her defence, which she read; and the following are the most material arguments it contained to invalidate the evidence adduced for the prosecutor:—She appealed to the Searcher of all hearts, that she never considered herself as legally married to Mr Hervey; she said that she considered herself as a single woman, and as such was addressed by the late Duke of Kingston; and that, influenced by a legitimate attachment to his grace, she instituted a suit in the Ecclesiastical Court, when her supposed marriage with Mr Hervey was declared null and void; but, anxious for every conscientious as well as legal sanction, she submitted an authentic statement of her case to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who, in the most decisive and unreserved manner, declared that she was at liberty to marry, and afterwards granted, and delivered to Dr Collier, a special licence for her marriage with the late Duke of Kingston. She said that on her marriage she experienced every mark of gracious esteem from their majesties, and her late royal mistress, the Princess Dowager of Wales, and was publicly recognised as Duchess of Kingston. Under such respectable sanctions and virtuous motives for the conduct she pursued, strengthened by a decision that had been esteemed conclusive and irrevocable for the space of seven centuries, if their lordships should deem her guilty upon any rigid principle of law, she hoped, nay, she was conscious, they would attribute her failure as proceeding from a mistaken judgment and erroneous advice, and would not censure her for intentional guilt. She bestowed the highest encomiums on the deceased duke, and solemnly assured the Court that she had in no one instance

abused her ascendancy over him ; and that so far from endeavouring to engross his possessions, she had declared herself amply provided for by that fortune for life which he was extremely anxious to bequeath to her in perpetuity. As to the neglect of the duke's eldest nephew, she said it was entirely the consequence of his disrespectful behaviour to her ; and she was not dissatisfied at a preference to another nephew, whose respect and attention to her had been such as the duke judged to be her due on her advancement to the honour of being the wife of his grace.

The lord high steward then desired Mr Wallace to proceed with the evidence on behalf of the duchess. The advocate stated the nature of the evidence he meant to produce to prove that Anne Cradock had asserted to different people that she had no recollection of the marriage between Mr Hervey and the lady at the bar ; and that she placed a reliance on a promise of having a provision made for her in consequence of the evidence she was to give on the present trial : and to invalidate the depositions of Judith Philips, he ordered the clerk to read a letter, wherein she supplicated her grace to exert her influence to prevent her husband's discharge from the duke's service ; and observed, that Mrs Philips had, on the preceding day, sworn that her husband was not dismissed, but voluntarily quitted his station in the household of his grace.

Mr Wallace called Mr Berkley, Lord Bristol's attorney, who said his lordship told him he was desirous of obtaining a divorce, and directed him to Anne Cradock, saying she was the only person then living who was present at his marriage ; and that a short time previous to the commencement of the jacitation suit, he waited upon Anne Cradock, who informed him that her memory was bad, and



that she could remember nothing perfectly in relation to the marriage, which must have been a long time before.

Anne Pritchard deposed, that about three months before she had been informed by Mrs Cradock that she expected to be provided for soon after the trial, and that she expected to be enabled to procure a place in the Custom-house for one of her relations.

This being the whole of the evidence to be produced on behalf of her grace, the lord high steward addressed their lordships, saying, that the evidence on both sides having been heard, it now became their lordships' duty to proceed to the consideration of the case ; that the importance and solemnity of the occasion required that they should severally pronounce their opinions in the absence of the prisoner at the bar, and that it was for the junior baron to speak first.

The prisoner having then been removed, their lordships declared that they found her guilty of the offence imputed to her.

Proclamation was then made that the usher of the black rod should replace the prisoner at the bar ; and immediately on her appearing, the lord high steward informed her that the lords had maturely considered the evidence adduced against her, as well as the testimony of the witnesses who had been called on her behalf, and that they had pronounced her guilty of the felony for which she was indicted. He then inquired whether she had anything to say why judgment should not be pronounced against her.

The duchess immediately handed in a paper containing the words, " I plead the privilege of the peerage," which were read by the clerk at the table.

The lord high steward then informed her grace that the lords had considered the plea, and agreed

to allow it, adding, " Madam, you will be discharged on paying the usual fees."

The duchess during the trial appeared to be perfectly collected, but on sentence being pronounced she fainted, and was carried out of court.

This solemnity was concluded on the 22nd of April, 1776; but the prosecutors still had a plan in embryo to confine the person of the Countess of Bristol, for to this rank she was now again reduced, to the kingdom, and to deprive her of her personal property; and a writ of *ne exeat regno* was actually in the course of preparation: but private notice being conveyed to her of this circumstance, she was advised immediately to quit the country. In order to conceal her flight, she caused her carriage to be driven publicly through the streets, and invited a large party to dine at her house; but, without waiting to apologise to her guests, she drove to Dover in a post-chaise, and there entering a boat with Mr Harvey, the captain of her yacht, she accompanied him to Calais. Circumstances of which she had been advised, and which had occurred during the period of her absence from Rome, rendered her immediate presence in that city necessary; and proceeding thither, without loss of time, she found that a Spanish friar, whom she had left in charge of her palace and furniture, had found means to convert her property into money, and after having seduced a young English girl, who had also been left in the palace, had absconded. Having now obtained the whole of her plate from the public bank where she had deposited it, she returned to Calais, which she adopted as the best place at which she could fix her residence, in consequence of the expeditious communication which existed between that town and London, by means of which she might be afforded the earliest intelligence of the proceedings of her opponents. Their business was

now to set aside, if possible, the will of the Duke of Kingston. There was no probability of the success of the attempt, but there was sufficient doubt upon the subject in the mind of the countess to keep all her apprehensions alive.

The will of his grace of Kingston, however, received every confirmation which the courts of justice could give, and the object of the countess now was to dissipate rather than expend the income of his estates. A house which she had purchased at Calais was not sufficient for her purpose; a mansion at Mont Martre, near Paris, was fixed on, and the purchase of it was negotiated in as short a time as the duchess could desire. There were only a few obstacles to enjoyment which were not considered until the purchase was completed. The house was in so ruinous a condition as to be in momentary danger of falling. The land was more like the field of the slothful than the vineyard of the industrious; and these evils were not perceived by the countess till she was in possession of her wishes. A lawsuit with the owner of the estate was the consequence, and the countess went to St Petersburg, and there turned brandy distiller, and returned to Paris before it was concluded. The possession of such a place, however, was not sufficient for the countess, and she proceeded to make a second purchase of a house, built upon a scale of infinite grandeur. The brother of the existing French king was the owner of a domain, suited in every respect for the residence of a person of such nobility, and the countess determined to become its mistress. It was called the territory of St. Assise, and was situated at a pleasant distance from Paris, abounding in game of all descriptions, and rich in all the luxuriant embellishments of nature. The mansion was of a size which rendered it fit for the occupation of a king; it contained three hundred beds. The



value of such an estate was too considerable to be expected in one payment : she therefore agreed to discharge the whole of the sum demanded, which was fifty-five thousand pounds, by instalments. The purchase on the part of the countess was a good one. It afforded not only game, but rabbits in plenty ; and finding them of superior quality and flavour, her ladyship, during the first week of her possession, had as many killed and sold as brought her three hundred guineas. At St. Petersburg she had been a distiller of brandy ; and now at Paris she turned rabbit-merchant.

Such was her situation, when one day, while she was at dinner, her servants received the intelligence that judgment respecting the house near Paris had been awarded against her. The sudden communication of the news produced an agitation of her whole frame. She flew into a violent passion, and burst an internal blood-vessel : but she appeared to have surmounted even this, until a few days afterwards, when preparing to rise from her bed, a servant who had long been with her endeavoured to dissuade her from her purpose. The countess said, " I am not very well, but I will rise ; " and on a remonstrance being attempted, she said, " At your peril disobey me : I will get up and walk about the room ; ring for the secretary to assist me." She was obeyed, dressed, and the secretary entered the chamber. The countess then walked about, complained of thirst, and said, " I could drink a glass of my fine Madeira, and eat a slice of toasted bread. I shall be quite well afterwards ; but let it be a large glass of wine." The attendant reluctantly brought, and the countess drank the wine. She then said, " I am perfectly recovered ; I knew the Madeira would do me good. My heart feels oddly. I will have another glass." The servant here observed that such a quantity of wine in the morning might intoxicate

rather than benefit. The countess persisted in her orders, and the second glass of Madeira being produced, she drank that also, and pronounced herself to be charmingly indeed. She then walked a little about the room, and afterwards said, "I will lie down on the couch; I can sleep, and after that I shall be entirely recovered." She seated herself on the couch, a female having hold of each hand. In this situation she soon appeared to have fallen into a sound sleep, until the women felt her hands colder than ordinary, and she was found to have expired. She died August 26th, 1796.

## DR WILLIAM DODD

### EXECUTED FOR FORGERY

THE character and the offence of this unfortunate divine are too well known to render it necessary that any introduction to the recital of the circumstances of his case should be attempted.

Dr Dodd was the eldest son of a clergyman who held the vicarage of Bourne in the county of Lincoln, and was born at Bourne on the 29th of May, 1729; and after finishing his school education, was admitted a sizar of Clare Hall, Cambridge, in the year 1745, under the tuition of Mr John Courtail, afterwards Archdeacon of Lewes. At the University he acquired the approbation of his superiors by his close attention to his studies; and at the close of the year 1749 he took his first degree of bachelor of arts with considerable reputation, his name being included in the list of wranglers. It was not only in his academical pursuits, however, that he was emulous of distinction. Having a pleasing manner, a genteel address, and a lively imagination, he was equally celebrated for his accomplishments and his learning. In particular he was fond of the elegances of dress, and became, as he ludicrously expressed it, "a zealous votary of the god of Dancing," to whose service he dedicated much of that time which he could borrow from his more important avocations.

The talent which he possessed was very early displayed to the public; and by the time he had attained the age of eighteen years, prompted by



the desire of fame, and perhaps also to increase his income, he commenced author, in which character he began to obtain some degree of reputation. At this period of his life, young, thoughtless, volatile and inexperienced, he precipitately quitted the University, and, relying entirely upon his pen, removed to the metropolis, where he entered largely into the gaieties of the town, and followed every species of amusement with the most dangerous avidity. In this course, however, he did not continue long. To the surprise of his friends, who least suspected him of taking such a step, without fortune, and destitute of all means of supporting a family, he hastily united himself, on the 15th of April, 1751, in marriage with Miss Mary Perkins, daughter of one of the domestics of Sir John Dolben, a young lady then residing in Frith-street, Soho, who, though endowed with personal attractions, was deficient in those of birth and fortune. To a person circumstanced as Mr Dodd then was, no measure could be more imprudent, or apparently more ruinous and destructive to his future prospects in life. He did not, however, seem to view it in that light, but, with a degree of thoughtlessness natural to him, he immediately took and furnished a house in Wardour-street. His friends now began to be alarmed at his situation, and his father came to town in great distress upon the occasion; and in consequence of the advice which he gave him, his son quitted the house before the commencement of winter, and, urged by the same preceptor, he was induced to adopt a new plan for his future subsistence. On the 19th of October in the same year, he was ordained a deacon by the Bishop of Ely, at Caius College, Cambridge; and, with more prudence than he had ever shown before, he now devoted himself with great assiduity to the study and duties of his profession. In these pursuits he

appeared so sincere, that he even renounced all his attention to his favourite objects—polite letters. At the end of his preface to the “*Beauties of Shakspeare*,” published in this year, he says, “For my own part, better and more important things henceforth demand my attention ; and I here with no small pleasure take leave of Shakspeare and the critics. As this work was begun and finished before I entered upon the sacred function in which I am now happily employed, let me trust this juvenile performance will prove no objection, since graver, and some very eminent, members of the Church have thought it no improper employ to comment upon, explain, and publish the works of their own country poets.”

The first service in which he was engaged as a clergyman was to assist the Rev Mr Wyatt, vicar of West Ham, as his curate : thither he removed, and there he spent the happiest and more honourable moments of his life. His behaviour was proper, decent, and exemplary. It acquired for him the respect and secured for him the favour of his parishioners so far, that on the death of their lecturer, in 1752, he was chosen to succeed him. His abilities had at this time every opportunity of being shown to advantage ; and his exertions were so properly directed, that he soon became a favourite and popular preacher. Those who were at this period of his life acquainted with his character and his talents, bear testimony to the indefatigable zeal which he exhibited in his ministry, and the success with which his efforts were crowned. The follies of his youth seemed entirely past, and his friends viewed the alteration in his conduct with the greatest satisfaction ; while the world promised itself an example to hold out for the imitation of others. At this early season of his life, he entertained sentiments favourable towards the opinions of

Mr Hutchinson, and he was suspected to incline towards Methodism ; but subsequent consideration confirmed his belief in the doctrines of the Established Church. In 1752 he was selected lecturer of St James, Garlick-hill, which, two years afterwards, he exchanged for the same post at St Olave, Hartstreet ; and about the same time he was appointed to preach Lady Moyer's lectures at St Paul's, where, from the visit of the three angels to Abraham, and other similar passages in the Old Testament, he endeavoured to prove the commonly-received doctrine of the Trinity. On the establishment of the Magdalen House in 1758, he was amongst the first and most active promoters of that excellent charitable institution, which derived great advantage from his zeal for its prosperity, and which, even up to the unhappy termination of his life, continued to be materially benefited by the exercise of his talents in its behalf. His exertions, however, were not confined to this hospital, but he was also one of the promoters of the Society for the Relief of Poor Debtors, and of the Humane Society for the recovery of persons apparently drowned.

From the time he entered upon the service of the Church, Dr Dodd had resided at West Ham, and made up the deficiency in his income by superintending the education of a few young gentlemen who were placed under his care ; an occupation for which he was well fitted. In 1759 he took the degree of Master of Arts, and in 1763 he was appointed chaplain in ordinary to the King ; and about the same time he became acquainted with Dr Squire, the bishop of St David's, who received him into his patronage, presented him to the prebend of Brecon, and recommended him to the Earl of Chesterfield as a proper person to be intrusted with the tuition of his successor in the title. The following year saw him chaplain



to the King; and in 1766 he took the degree of Doctor of Laws at Cambridge.

The expectations which he had long entertained of succeeding to the rectory of West Ham now appeared hopeless; and having given up all prospect of their being realised, after having been twice disappointed, he resigned his lectureship both there and in the City, and quitted the place—"a place," said he to Lord Chesterfield in a dedication to a sermon entitled "Popery inconsistent with the natural Rights of Men in general, and Englishmen in particular," published in 1768, "ever dear, and ever regretted by me, the loss of which, truly affecting to my mind (for there I was useful, and there I trust I was loved), nothing but your lordship's friendship and connection could have counterbalanced." The "Thoughts in Prison" of the unfortunate gentleman contain a passage of a similar tendency, from which it may be inferred that he was compelled to quit this, his favourite residence; a circumstance which he pathetically laments, and probably with great reason, as the first step to that change in his situation which led him insensibly to his last fatal catastrophe.

On his quitting West Ham, he removed to a house in Southampton-row; and at the same time he launched out into scenes of expense, which his income, although now by no means a small one, was inadequate to support. He provided himself with a country-house at Ealing, and exchanged his chariot for a coach, in order to accommodate his pupils, who, besides his noble charge, were in general persons of family and fortune. About the same time it was his misfortune to obtain a prize of 1000*l* in the state lottery; and elated with this success, he engaged with a builder in a plan to erect a chapel near the palace of the Queen, from whom it took its name. He entered also into a like partnership

at Charlotte Chapel, Bloomsbury, and both these schemes were for some time very beneficial to him, though their proceeds were much inferior to his expensive habits of living. His expectations from the former of these undertakings were extremely sanguine. It is reported that in fitting up his chapel near the palace, he flattered himself with the hopes of having some young royal auditors, and in that expectation assigned a particular pew or gallery for the heir-apparent. But in this, as in many other of his views, he was disappointed.

In the year 1772 he obtained the rectory of Hockliffe, in Bedfordshire, the first cure of souls he ever had. With this also he held the vicarage of Chalgrove; and the two were soon after consolidated. An accident happened about this time, from which he narrowly escaped with his life. Returning from Barnet, he was stopped near St Pancras by a highwayman, who discharged a pistol into the carriage, which, happily, only broke the glass. For this fact the delinquent was tried, and, on Mrs Dodd's evidence, convicted and hanged. Early in the next year Lord Chesterfield died, and was succeeded by Dr Dodd's pupil, who appointed his preceptor to be his chaplain.

At this period Dr Dodd appears to have been in the zenith of his popularity and reputation. Beloved and respected by all orders of people, he would have reached, in all probability, the situation which was the object of his wishes, had he possessed patience enough to have waited for it, and prudence sufficient to keep himself out of those difficulties which might prove fatal to his integrity. But the habits of dissipation and expense had acquired too great an influence over him; and he had by their means involved himself in considerable debts. To extricate himself from them, he was tempted to an act which entirely cut off every hope which he could

entertain of rising in his profession, and totally ruined him in the opinion of the world. On the translation of Bishop Moss, in February, 1774, to the see of Bath and Wells, the valuable rectory of St George, Hanover-square, fell to the disposal of the Crown, by virtue of the King's prerogative. Whether from the suggestion of his own mind, or from the persuasion of some friend, is uncertain ; but on this occasion he took a step of all others the most wild and extravagant, and the least likely to be attended with success. He caused an anonymous letter to be sent to Lady Apsley, offering the sum of three thousand pounds if by her means he could be presented to the living. The letter was immediately communicated to the chancellor, and, after being traced to the writer, was laid before his majesty. The insult offered to so high an officer by the proposal was followed by instant punishment. Dr Dodd's name was ordered to be struck out of the list of chaplains. The press teemed with satire and invective ; he was abused and ridiculed in the papers of the day ; and to crown the whole, the transaction became a subject of entertainment in one of Mr Foote's pieces at the Haymarket.

As no explanation could justify so absurd a measure, so no apology could palliate it. An evasive letter in the newspapers, promising a justification at a future day, was treated with universal contempt ; and stung with remorse, and feelingly alive to the disgrace he had brought on himself, he hastily quitted the place where neglect and insult only attended him, and going to Geneva to his late pupil, he was presented by him with the living of Winge in Buckinghamshire, which he held with that of Hockliffe, by virtue of a dispensation. Though encumbered with debts, he might still have retrieved his circumstances, if not his character, had he attended to the dictates of prudence ; but his



extravagance continued undiminished, and drove him to pursue schemes which overwhelmed him with additional infamy. He became the editor of a newspaper ; and it is said that he even attempted, by means of a commission of bankruptcy, to clear himself from his debts ; an attempt in which, however, he failed. From this period it would appear that every step which he took led to complete his ruin. In the summer of 1776 he went to France, and there, with little regard to decency or the observances proper to be maintained by a minister of religion, he paraded himself in a phaeton at the races on the plains of Sablons, dressed in all the foppery of the kingdom in which he was temporarily resident. At the beginning of winter he returned to London, and continued there to exercise the duties of his profession until the very moment of his committing the offence for which his life was subsequently forfeited to the offended laws of his country. On the 2nd of February, 1777, he preached his last sermon at the Magdalen Chapel, where he was still heard with approbation and pleasure ; and on the 4th of the same month he forged a bond, purporting to be that of his late pupil, the Earl of Chesterfield, for 4200*l*. Pressed by creditors, and unable any longer to meet their demands or soothe their importunities, he was driven to commit this crime, as the only expedient to which he could have recourse to aid him in his escape from his difficulties. The method which he adopted in completing the forgery was very remarkable. He pretended that the noble earl had urgent occasion to borrow 4000*l*, but that he did not choose to be his own agent, and he begged that the matter therefore might be secretly and expeditiously conducted. A person named Lewis Robertson was the person whom he employed as broker to negotiate the transaction ; and he presented to him a bond, not filled up or

signed, that he might find a person ready to advance the sum required, as he directed him to say, to a young nobleman who had lately come of age. Several applications were made by Robertson without success, the persons refusing because they were not to be present when the bond was executed ; but at length the agent, confiding in the honour and integrity of his employer, went to Messrs Fletcher and Peach, who agreed to advance the money. Mr Robertson then carried the bond back to the doctor, in order that it might be filled up and executed ; and on the following day it was returned, bearing the signature of the Earl of Chesterfield, and attested by the doctor himself. Mr Robertson, knowing that Mr Fletcher was a man who required all legal observances to be attended to, and that he would therefore object to the bond as bearing the name of one witness only, put his name under that of Dr Dodd, and in that state he carried the bond to him, and received from him the sum of 4000*l* in return, which he paid over to his employer.

The bond was subsequently produced to the Earl of Chesterfield ; but immediately on his seeing it, he disowned it, and expressed himself at a loss to know by whom such a forgery upon him could have been committed. It was evident, however, that the supposed attesting witnesses must, if their signatures were genuine, be acquainted with its author ; and Mr Manly, his lordship's agent, went directly to consult Mr Fletcher upon the best course to be taken ; and after some deliberation, Mr Fletcher, a Mr Innis, and Mr Manly proceeded to Guildhall to prefer an information with regard to the forgery against Dr Dodd and Mr Robertson. Mr Robertson was without difficulty secured ; and then Fletcher, Innis, and Manly, accompanied by two of the lord mayor's officers, went to the house of Dr Dodd in Argyle-street, whither he had recently removed.

Upon their explaining the nature of their business to him, he appeared much struck and affected, and declared his willingness to make any reparation in his power. Mr Manly told him that his instantly returning the money was the only mode which remained for him to save himself; and he immediately gave up six notes of 500*l* each, making 3000*l* and he drew on his banker for 500*l* more. The broker then returned 100*l* and the doctor gave a second draft on his banker for 200*l*, and a judgment on his goods for the remaining 400*l*. All this was done by the doctor in full reliance on the honour of the parties that the bond should be returned to him cancelled; but, notwithstanding this restitution, he was taken before the lord mayor, and charged with the forgery. The doctor declared that he had no intention to defraud Lord Chesterfield or the gentlemen who advanced the money, and hoped that the satisfaction he had made in returning it would atone for his offence. He was pressed, he said, exceedingly for 300*l* to pay some bills due to tradesmen, and took this step as a temporary resource, and would have repaid the money in half a year. "My Lord Chesterfield," added he, "cannot but have some tenderness for me as my pupil. I love him, and he knows it. There is nobody wishes to prosecute. I am sure my Lord Chesterfield don't want my life,—I hope he will show clemency to me. Mercy should triumph over justice." Clemency, however, was denied; and the doctor was committed to the Compter in preparation for his trial. On the 19th of February, Dr Dodd, being put to the bar at the Old Bailey, addressed the Court in the following words:—

"My lords,—I am informed that the bill of indictment against me has been found on the evidence of Mr Robertson, who was taken out of Newgate,



without any authority or leave from your lordships, for the purpose of procuring the bill to be found. Mr Robertson is a subscribing witness to the bond, and, as I conceive, would be swearing to exculpate himself if he should be admitted as a witness against me ; and as the bill has been found upon his evidence, which was surreptitiously obtained, I submit to your lordships that I ought not to be compelled to plead on this indictment ; and upon this question I beg to be heard by my counsel. I beg leave also further to observe to your lordships, that the gentlemen on the other side of the question are bound over to prosecute Mr Robertson.”

Previously to the arguments of the counsel, an order which had been surreptitiously obtained from an officer of the court, dated Wednesday, February 19, and directed to the keeper of Newgate, commanding him to carry Lewis Robertson to Hicks's Hall, in order to his giving evidence before the grand inquest on the present bill of indictment—as well as a resolution of the Court, reprobating the said order—and also the recognizance entered into by Mr Manly, Mr Peach, Mr Innis, and the Right Hon the Earl of Chesterfield to prosecute and give evidence against Dr Dodd and Lewis Robertson for forgery—were ordered to be read ; and the clerk of the arraigns was directed to inform the Court whether the name “ Lewis Robertson ” was indorsed as a witness on the back of the indictment, which was answered in the affirmative.

The counsel now proceeded in their arguments for and against the prisoner. Mr Howarth, one of Dr Dodd's advocates, contended that no person ought to plead or answer to an indictment, if it appeared upon the face of that indictment that the evidence upon which the bill was found was not legal, or competent to have been adduced before the grand jury.

Mr Cooper and Mr Buller, on the same side, pursued the same line of argument with equal ingenuity, and expressed a hope that Dr Dodd would not be called upon to plead to an indictment found upon such evidence as had been pointed out, but that the indictment would be ordered to be quashed.

The counsel for the prosecution advanced various arguments in opposition to those employed on the other side, and the learned judge having taken a note of the objection, it was agreed that the trial should proceed, the question of the competency of Mr Robertson as a witness being reserved for the consideration of the twelve judges.

The doctor was then arraigned upon the indictment which charged him in the usual terms with the forgery upon the Earl of Chesterfield; and the evidence in proof of the facts above stated having been given, the Court called upon the prisoner for his defence. He addressed the Court and jury in the following terms:—

“ My lords and gentlemen of the jury,—Upon the evidence which has this day been produced against me, I find it very difficult to address your lordships. There is no man in the world who has a deeper sense of the heinous nature of the crime for which I stand indicted than myself: I view it, my lords, in all its extent of malignancy towards a commercial state like ours; but, my lords, I humbly apprehend, though no lawyer, that the moral turpitude and malignancy of the crime always, both in the eye of the law and of religion, consists in the intention. I am informed, my lords, that the act of parliament on this head runs perpetually in this style, *with an intention to defraud*. Such an intention, my lords and gentlemen of the jury, I believe, has not been attempted to be proved upon me, and the consequences that have

happened, which have appeared before you, sufficiently prove that a perfect and ample restitution has been made. I leave it, my lords, to you and the gentlemen of the jury to consider, that if an unhappy man ever deviates from the law of right, yet if in the single first moment of recollection he does all that he can to make a full and perfect amends, what, my lords and gentlemen of the jury, can God and man desire further? My lords, there are a variety of little circumstances too tedious to trouble you with, with respect to this matter. Were I to give loose to my feelings, I have many things to say which I am sure you would feel with respect to me; but as it appears on all hands, that no injury, intentional or real, has been done to any man living, I hope that you will consider the case in its true state of clemency. I must observe to your lordships, that though I have met with all candour in this court, yet I have been pursued with excessive cruelty; I have been prosecuted after the most express engagements, after the most solemn assurances, after the most delusive, soothing arguments of Mr Manly; I have been prosecuted with a cruelty scarcely to be paralleled. A person avowedly criminal in the same indictment as myself has been brought forth as a capital witness against me; a fact, I believe, totally unexampled. My lords, oppressed as I am with infamy, loaded as I am with distress, sunk under this cruel prosecution, your lordships and the gentlemen of the jury cannot think life a matter of any value to me. No, my lords, I solemnly protest, that death of all blessings would be the most pleasant to me after this pain. I have yet, my lords, ties which call upon me—ties which render me desirous even to continue this miserable existence. I have a wife, my lords, who, for twenty-seven years, has lived an unparalleled example of conjugal attachment and fidelity, and whose behaviour during



this trying scene would draw tears of approbation, I am sure, even from the most inhuman. My lords, I have creditors, honest men, who will lose much by my death. I hope, for the sake of justice towards them, some mercy will be shown to me. If, upon the whole, these considerations at all avail with you—if, upon the most impartial survey of matters, not the slightest intention of injury can appear to any one—(and I solemnly declare it was in my power to replace it in three months—of this I assured Mr Robertson frequently, and had his solemn assurances that no man should be privy to it but Mr Fletcher and himself)—and if no injury was done to any man upon earth, I then hope, I trust, I fully confide myself in the tenderness, humanity, and protection, of my country.”

The jury retired for about ten minutes, and then returned with a verdict that “the prisoner was guilty;” but at the same time presented a petition, humbly recommending the doctor to the royal mercy.

It was afterwards declared that upon the reserved point, the opinion of the judges was, that he had been legally convicted. On the last day of the sessions Dr Dodd was again put to the bar to receive judgment. The clerk of the arraigns then addressed him, saying,

“Dr William Dodd, you stand convicted of forgery, what have you to say why this court should not give you judgment to die, according to law?”

In reply Dr Dodd addressed the court as follows:—

“My lord,—I now stand before you a dreadful example of human infirmity. I entered upon public life with the expectations common to young men whose education has been liberal, and whose abilities have been flattered; and, when I became a clergyman, I considered myself as not impairing

the dignity of the order. I was not an idle, nor, I hope, a useless minister: I taught the truths of Christianity with the zeal of conviction and the authority of innocence.

“ My labours were approved, my pulpit became popular, and I have reason to believe that, of those who heard me, some have been preserved from sin, and some have been reclaimed. Condescend, my lord, to think, if these considerations aggravate my crime, how much they must embitter my punishment! Being distinguished and elevated by the confidence of mankind, I had too much confidence in myself; and, thinking my integrity—what others thought it—established in sincerity, and fortified by religion, I did not consider the danger of vanity, nor suspect the deceitfulness of mine own heart. The day of conflict came, in which temptation seized and overwhelmed me! I committed the crime, which I entreat your lordship to believe that my conscience hourly represents to me in its full bulk of mischief and malignity. Many have been overpowered by temptation, who are now among the penitent in heaven! To an act now waiting the decision of vindictive justice I will now presume to oppose the counterbalance of almost thirty years (a great part of the life of man) passed in exciting and exercising charity—in relieving such distresses as I now feel—in administering those consolations which I now want. I will not otherwise extenuate my offence than by declaring, what I hope will appear to many, and what many circumstances make probable, that I did not intend finally to defraud: nor will it become me to apportion my own punishment, by alleging that my sufferings have been not much less than my guilt; I have fallen from reputation which ought to have made me cautious, and from a fortune which ought to have given me content. I am sunk at once into

poverty and scorn ; my name and my crime fill the ballads in the streets ; the sport of the thoughtless, and the triumph of the wicked ! It may seem strange, my lord, that, remembering what I have lately been, I should still wish to continue what I am ! but contempt of death, how speciously soever it may mingle with human virtues, has nothing in it suitable to Christian penitence. Many motives impel me to beg earnestly for life. I feel the natural horror of a violent death, the universal dread of untimely dissolution. I am desirous to recompense the injury I have done to the clergy, to the world, and to religion, and to efface the scandal of my crime, by the example of my repentance : but, above all, I wish to die with thoughts more composed, and, calmer preparation. The gloom and confusion of a prison, the anxiety of a trial, the horrors of suspense, and the inevitable vicissitudes of passion, leave not the mind in a due disposition for the holy exercises of prayer and self-examination. Let not a little life be denied me, in which I may, by meditation and contrition, prepare myself to stand at the tribunal of Omnipotence, and support the presence of that Judge, who shall distribute to all according to their works : who will receive and pardon the repenting sinner, and from whom the merciful shall obtain mercy ! For these reasons, my lords, amidst shame and misery, I yet wish to live ; and most humbly implore, that I may be recommended by your lordship to the clemency of his majesty."

Here he sunk down overcome with mental agony, and some time elapsed before he was sufficiently recovered to hear the dreadful sentence of the law, which the Recorder pronounced upon him in the following words :

" Dr William Dodd,

" You have been convicted of the offence of



publishing a forged and countefeit bond, knowing it to be forged and counterfeited ; and you have had the advantage which the laws of this country afford to every man in your situation, a fair, an impartial, and an attentive trial. The jury, to whose justice you appealed, have found you guilty ; their verdict has undergone the consideration of the learned judges, and they found no ground to impeach the justice of that verdict ; you yourself have admitted the justice of it ; and now the very painful duty that the necessity of the law imposes upon the court, to pronounce the sentence of that law against you, remains only to be performed. You appear to entertain a very proper sense of the enormity of the offence which you have committed ; you appear, too, in a state of contrition of mind, and I, doubt not, have duly reflected how far the dangerous tendency of the offence you have been guilty of is increased by the influence of example, in being committed by a person of your character, and of the sacred function of which you are a member. These sentiments seem to be yours ; I would wish to cultivate such sentiments ; but I would not wish to add to the anguish of your mind by dwelling upon your situation. Your application for mercy must be made elsewhere ; it would be cruel in the court to flatter you ; there is a power of dispensing mercy, where you may apply. Your own good sense, and the contrition you express, will induce you to lessen the influence of the example by publishing your hearty and sincere detestation of the offence of which you are convicted ; and will show you that to attempt to palliate or extenuate it, would indeed add to the influence of a crime of this kind being committed by a person of your character and known abilities. I would therefore warn you against anything of that kind. Now, having said this, I am obliged to pronounce the sentence of the law, which

is—That you, Doctor William Dodd, be carried from hence to the place from whence you came; that from thence you be carried to the place of execution, and that there you be hanged by the neck until you are dead.” To this Dr Dodd replied, “Lord Jesus, receive my soul!” and was immediately conveyed from the bar.

Great exertions were now made to save Dr Dodd. The newspapers were filled with letters and paragraphs in his favour; individuals of all ranks exerted themselves in his behalf; the members of several charities which had been benefited by him joined in application to the throne for mercy; parish officers went in mourning from house to house, to procure subscriptions to a petition to the king; and this petition, which, with the names of nearly thirty thousand persons, filled twenty-three sheets of parchment, was actually presented. Even the lord mayor and common council went in a body to St James’s, to solicit mercy for the convict. These were, however, of no avail. On the 15th of June the privy council assembled, and deliberated on the cases of the several prisoners then under condemnation; and in the end a warrant was ordered to be made out for the execution of Dr Dodd, with two others (one of whom was afterwards reprieved), on the 27th of the same month.

Having been flattered with the hopes of a pardon, he appeared to be much shocked at the intimation of his approaching destiny; but resumed in a short time a degree of fortitude sufficient to enable him to pass through the last scene of his life with firmness and decency. On the 26th he took leave of his wife and some friends, and he afterwards declared himself ready to atone for the offence he had given to the world. His deportment was meek, humble, and devout, expressive of resignation and contrition, and calculated to inspire sentiments

of respect for his person, and concern for his unhappy fate.

He was attended to the fatal spot, in a mourning-coach, by the Rev Mr Villette, Ordinary of Newgate, and the Rev Mr Dobey. Another criminal, named John Harris, was executed at the same time. It is impossible to give an idea of the immense crowds of people that thronged the streets from Newgate to Tyburn. When the prisoners arrived at the fatal tree, and were placed in the cart, Dr Dodd exhorted his fellow sufferer in so generous a manner, as testified that he had not forgotten his duty as a clergyman ; and he was also very fervent in the exercise of his own devotions. Just before he was turned off, he was observed to whisper to the executioner ; and, although we have not the means of ascertaining the precise purport of his remark, it is pretty obvious from the fact, that as soon as the cart had been drawn away from the gibbet, he ran immediately under the scaffold and took hold of the doctor's legs as if to steady his body, and the unfortunate gentleman appeared to die without pain.

Of his behaviour before execution a particular account was given by Mr Villette, Ordinary of Newgate, in the following terms :—

“ On the morning of his death I went to him, with the Rev Mr Dobey, Chaplain of the Magdalen, whom he desired to attend him to the place of execution. He appeared composed ; and when I asked him how he had been supported, he said that he had had some comfortable sleep, by which he should be the better enabled to perform his duty.

“ As we went from his room, in our way to the chapel, we were joined by his friend, who had spent the foregoing evening with him, and also by another clergyman. When we were in the vestry adjoining the chapel, he exhorted his fellow-sufferer, who had attempted to destroy himself, but had been



prevented by the vigilance of the keeper. He spoke to him with great tenderness and emotion of heart; entreating him to consider that he had but a short time to live, and that it was highly necessary that he, as well as himself, made good use of their time, implored pardon of God under a deep sense of sin, and looked to that Lord by Whose merits alone sinners can be saved. He desired me to call in the other gentlemen, who likewise assisted him to move the heart of the poor youth; but the Doctor's words were the most pathetic and effectual. He lifted up his hands, and cried out 'Oh! Lord Jesus, have mercy upon us! and give, oh! give unto him, my fellow sinner, that, as we suffer together, we may go together to Heaven!' His conversation to this poor youth was so moving, that tears flowed from the eyes of all present.

"When we went into the chapel to prayer and the holy communion, true contrition and warmth of devotion appeared evident in him throughout the whole service. After it was ended, he again addressed himself to Harris in the most moving and persuasive manner, and not without effect; for he declared that he was glad that he had not made away with himself, and said he was easier, and hoped he should now go to Heaven. The Doctor told him how Christ had suffered for them; and that he himself was a greater sinner than he, as he had sinned against light and conviction, and therefore his guilt was greater; and that as he was confident that mercy was shown to his soul, so he should look to Christ and trust in His merits.

"He prayed God to bless his friends who were present with him, and to give his blessing to all his brethren the clergy; that he would pour out His spirit upon them, and make them true ministers of Jesus Christ, and that they might follow the divine precepts of their heavenly Master. Turning to one

who stood near him, he stretched out his hand, and said, 'Now, my dear friend, speculation is at an end; all must be real! What poor ignorant beings we are!' He prayed for the Magdalens, and wished they were there, to sing for him the 23d Psalm.

"After he had waited some time for the officers, he asked what o'clock it was; and, being told that it was half an hour after eight, he said 'I wish they were ready, for I long to be gone.' He requested of his friends, who were in tears about him, to pray for him; to which he was answered, by two of them, 'We pray more than language can utter.' He replied, 'I believe it.'

"At length he was summoned to go down into a part of the yard which is enclosed from the rest of the gaol, where the two unhappy convicts and the friends of the doctor were alone. On his seeing two prisoners looking out of the windows, he went to them, and exhorted them so pathetically, that they both wept abundantly. He said once, 'I am now a spectacle to men, and shall soon be a spectacle to angels.'

"Just before the sheriff's officers came with the halters, one who was walking with him told him that there was yet a little ceremony he must pass through before he went out. He asked 'What is that?'—'You will be bound.' He looked up, and said, 'Yet I am free; my freedom is there,' pointing upwards. He bore it with Christian patience, and beyond what might have been expected; and, when the men offered to excuse tying his hands, he desired them to do their duty, and thanked them for their kindness. After he was bound, I offered to assist him with my arm in conducting him through the yard, where several people were assembled to see him; but he replied, with seeming pleasure, 'No, I am as firm as a rock.' As he passed along the yard, the spectators and prisoners wept

and bemoaned him ; and he, in return, prayed God to bless them.

“ On the way to execution he consoled himself in reflecting and speaking on what Christ had suffered for him ; lamented the depravity of human nature, which made sanguinary laws necessary ; and said he could gladly have died in the prison-yard, as being led out to public execution tended greatly to distress him. He desired me to read to him the 51st Psalm, and also pointed out an admirable penitential prayer from ‘ Rossell’s Prisoner’s Director.’ He prayed again for the king, and likewise for the people.

“ When he came near the street where he formerly dwelt he was much affected, and wept. He said, probably his tears would seem to be the effect of cowardice, but it was a weakness he could not well help ; and added, he hoped he was going to a better home.

“ When he arrived at the gallows he ascended the cart, and spoke to his fellow-sufferer. He then prayed, not only for himself, but also for his wife, and the unfortunate youth that suffered with him ; and, declaring that he died in the true faith of the Gospel of Christ, in perfect love and charity with all mankind, and with thankfulness to his friends, he was launched into eternity, imploring mercy for his soul for the sake of his blessed Redeemer.”

A paper, of which the following is a copy, had been delivered by Dr Dodd to Mr Vilette to be read at the place of execution, but was omitted as it seemed impossible to make all present aware of its contents.

“ To the words of dying men regard has always been paid. I am brought hither to suffer for an act of fraud, of which I confess myself guilty with shame, such as my former state of life naturally produces, and I hope with such sorrow as He, to



Whom the heart is known, will not disregard. I repent that I have violated the laws by which peace and confidence are established among men ; I repent that I have attempted to injure my fellow-creatures ; and I repent that I have brought disgrace upon my order, and discredit upon religion : but my offences against God are without number, and can admit only of general confession and general repentance. Grant, Almighty God, for the sake of Jesus Christ, that my repentance, however late, however imperfect, may not be in vain !

“ The little good that now remains in my power is to warn others against those temptations by which I have been seduced. I have always sinned against conviction ; my principles have never been shaken ; I have always considered the Christian religion as a revelation from God, and its Divine Author as the Saviour of the world ; but the laws of God, though never disowned by me, have often been forgotten. I was led astray from religious strictness by the delusion of show and the delights of voluptuousness. I never knew or attended to the calls of frugality, or the needful minuteness of painful economy. Vanity and pleasure, into which I plunged, required expense disproportionate to my income ; expense brought distress upon me ; and distress, importunate distress, urged me to temporary fraud.

“ For this fraud I am to die ; and I die declaring, in the most solemn manner, that, however I have deviated from my own precepts, I have taught others, to the best of my knowledge, and with all sincerity, the true way to eternal happiness. My life, for some few unhappy years past, has been dreadfully erroneous ; but my ministry has been always sincere. I have constantly believed ; and I now leave the world solemnly avowing my conviction, that there is no other name under Heaven

by which we can be saved but only the name of the Lord Jesus ; and I entreat all who are here to join with me in my last petition, that, for the sake of that Lord Jesus Christ, my sins may be forgiven, and my soul received into His everlasting kingdom.

“ June 27, 1777.”

“ WILLIAM DODD.”

The body of the Doctor was on the Monday following carried to Cowley, in Buckinghamshire, and deposited in the church there.

During the doctor's confinement in Newgate (a period of several months) he chiefly employed himself in writing various pieces, which show at once his piety and talent. The principal of these were his “ Thoughts in Prison,” in five parts, from which we cannot doubt but that our readers, in finishing our life of so eminent, yet unfortunate, a man, will be gratified by the insertion of a few short extracts.

“ I began these Thoughts,” says the unhappy man, writing in Newgate, under date of the 23d of April, 1777, after his condemnation, “ merely from the impression in my mind, without plan, purpose, or motive, more than the situation of my soul.

“ I continued thence on a thoughtful and regular plan ; and I have been enabled wonderfully, in a state which in better days I should have supposed would have destroyed all power of reflection, to bring them nearly to a conclusion. I dedicate them to God, and the reflecting serious among my fellow-creatures ; and I bless the Almighty for the ability to go through them amidst the terrors of this dire place (Newgate), and the bitter anguish of my disconsolate mind. The thinking will easily pardon all inaccuracies, as I am neither able nor willing to read over these melancholy lines with a curious or critical eye. They are imperfect, but in the language of the heart ; and, had I time and inclination, might, and should be, improved.—But——

(Signed)

“ W. D.”

The unfortunate author's Thoughts on his Imprisonment are thus introduced :—

“ My friends are gone ! harsh on its sullen hinge  
Grates the dread door : the massy bolts respond  
Tremendous to the surly keeper's touch :  
The dire keys clang, with movement dull and slow,  
While their behest the ponderous locks perform :  
And, fasten'd firm, the object of their care  
Is left to solitude—to sorrow left.

“ But wherefore fasten'd ? Oh ! stil' stronger bonds  
Than bolts or locks, or doors of molten brass,  
To solitude and sorrow could consign  
His anguish'd soul, and prison him, though free  
For whither should he fly, or where produce  
In open day, and to the golden sun,  
His hapless head ! whence every laurel torn,  
On his bald brow sits grinning infamy :  
And all in sportive triumph twines around  
The keen, the stinging arrows of disgrace.”

After dwelling on the miseries of that dreary confinement, at sight of which he formerly started back with horror, he adds

“ O dismal change ! now not in friendly sort  
A Christian visitor, to pour the balm  
Of Christian comfort in some wretch's ear—  
I am that wretch myself ! and want, much want,  
That Christian consolation I bestow'd ;  
So cheerfully bestow'd ! Want, want, my God,  
From Thee the mercy, which, Thou know'st my gladsome  
soul  
Ever sprang forth with transport to impart.

“ Why then, mysterious Providence, pursued  
With such unfeeling ardour ? Why pursued  
To death's dread bourn, by men to me unknown !  
Why—stop the deep question ; it o'erwhelms my soul :  
It reels, it staggers ! Earth turns round ! My brain  
Whirls in confusion ! My impetuous heart  
Throbs with pulsation not to be restrain'd ;  
Why ?—Where ? —O Chesterfield, my son, my son ! ”



The unfortunate divine afterwards thus proceeds:—

“ Nay, talk not of composure ! I had thought  
 In older time, that my weak heart was soft,  
 And pity’s self might break it. I had thought  
 That marble-eyed Severity would crack  
 The slender nerves which guide my reins of sense,  
 And give me up to madness ! ’Tis not so ;  
 My heart is callous, and my nerves are tough ;  
 It will not break ; they will not crack ; or else  
 What more, just heaven ! was wanting to the deed,  
 Than to behold—Oh ! that eternal night  
 Had in that moment screened from myself !  
 My Stanhope to behold ! Ah ! piercing sight !  
 Forget it ; ’tis distraction : speak who can !  
 But I am lost ! a criminal adjudged ! ”

It is not a little singular that Dr Dodd, a few years before his death, published a sermon, intitled, “ The frequency of capital punishments inconsistent with justice, sound policy, and religion.” This, he says, was intended to have been preached at the Chapel Royal, at St James’s ; but omitted on account of the absence of the court, during the author’s month of waiting.

The following extract will show the unfortunate man’s opinion on this subject, although there is no reason to suppose that he then contemplated the commission of the crime for which he suffered. He says :—

“ It would be easy to show the injustice of those laws which demand blood for the slightest offences ; the superior justice and propriety of inflicting perpetual and laborious servitude ; the greater utility hereof to the sufferer, as well as to the state, especially wherein we have a variety of necessary occupations, peculiarly noxious and prejudicial to the lives of the honest and industrious, and in which they might be employed, who had forfeited their lives and their liberties to society.”

## ROBERT EMMET

EXECUTED FOR HIGH TREASON

THIS enthusiast was the son of Dr Emmet, a man of good family, and possessed of considerable wealth ; but who, having imbibed opinions favourable to republicanism, took care to instil them into his children. His eldest son was implicated in the Irish rebellion of 1798, and escaped with his life upon the terms offered to Arthur O'Connor, Dr M'Nevin, and others, and accepted by them, and, like them, became an exile in a foreign land.

The hero of the present sketch was intended for the Irish Bar, and received a most liberal education. In Trinity College he became conspicuous, not only for his abilities, but for his display of eloquence in the " Historical Debating Society," a school which matured the talents of Bushe, Burrows, and several other members of the Irish Bar. Young Emmet, however, wanted discretion ; and having too often avowed his political principles, a prosecution was threatened, to avoid which he precipitately fled to France, where his republican opinions were confirmed.

In 1803 he returned to Dublin, not being then more than twenty-four years of age, and found himself in possession of three thousand five hundred pounds, left him by his father, then recently deceased. With this money, and the talents and connections which he possessed, he might easily have established his own independence ; but the sober business of life had no attractions for him ;

he aspired to greater fame, and resolved to attempt the separation of his country from England.

Wild and extravagant as the scheme was, he entered seriously upon it, and easily found abettors among those who had escaped the angry vengeance of 1798. Having procured several associates, he took a house in Patrick-street, and converted it into a rebel depôt for powder, guns, swords, pikes, &c. In the purchase and preparation of these he expended upwards of one thousand pounds; but before the plan of insurrection was ripe, the powder in the magazine, through accident, ignited, and the whole depôt was blown into the air. Such, however, was the fidelity of Emmet's partisans, that no discovery took place, further than that caused by the explosion; and the government, who ordered the guns to be brought to the Castle, remained ignorant of the purpose for which those destructive implements were provided.

A mind so sanguine as that of Emmet was not to be damped by an accidental disappointment: he collected his partisans, took another house in a lane in Thomas-street, and again commenced preparations for a popular rebellion. The ramifications of treason were easily extended through Ireland, where the discontent of the Catholics induced them to join in any extravagant scheme which promised them redress of grievances. Emmet had correspondents in every county; and the 23rd of July, 1803, was the day appointed for a general rising, the signal of which was to be an attack upon Dublin.

The plan of surprising the metropolis was admirably adapted for its sanguinary purpose; but fortunately several disappointments took place, and Emmet was unable to proceed as he intended. In the confusion of such a moment the rebels deceived one another, and several hundred men, who came in from the country, returned home, being told that



the *rising* was postponed, while those who remained were crowded into the *depôt*, and impeded the preparations. It was too late, however, to retract, or alter the intended movement, as Emmet expected the whole country to rise on that night. He therefore made the desperate attempt, and, with eighty followers, sallied out, at nine o'clock, into Thomas-street, and made towards the Castle, which he intended to surprise.

The experience of a few minutes showed him his madness and folly; for he quickly found himself without authority, in the midst of a ruffianly mob, who would neither obey nor accompany him; but who soon convinced him, that, though cowardly, they were brutal and sanguinary. When he had arrived at the market-house, his followers had diminished to eighteen; and as he was now convinced of his rashness, he prevented the discharge of a rocket which was to be the signal for the out-posts to commence hostilities. This act saved the lives of hundreds, for the Wexford men, to the number of three hundred, had assembled on the Coal-quay, and other large bodies had met in the barley-fields behind Mountjoy-square; all of whom, in consequence, escaped uninjured, and were prevented from inflicting injury on others.

The rebel band in Thomas-street, meanwhile, largely increased in numbers; but, being without a leader, they remained confused and inactive. At this moment, however, an act of atrocity was perpetrated, sufficiently serious to exhibit the nature of the design. The coach of the lamented Lord Kilwarden, chief justice of the Court of King's Bench, containing his lordship, and his nephew and niece, the Rev Mr Wolfe, and Miss Wolfe, drove up, and was instantly surrounded. Much confusion prevailed, and his lordship received a deadly stab from the hand of an assassin which eventually

deprived him of life ; his nephew was dragged from the vehicle and ill-treated ; but Miss Wolfe was borne to an opposite house in the arms of a lusty rebel, apparently more humane than his comrades.

The precise particulars of the murder of Lord Kilwarden are not known, and have always been the subject of controversy. By some it is alleged that it was the unpremeditated act of a ferocious rabble ; by others, that he was mistaken for another person ; but there is another account, which admits the mistake in the first instance, but subjoins other particulars, which appear sufficiently probable. It is related, that, in the year 1795, when his lordship was attorney-general, a number of young men, between the ages of fifteen and twenty years, were indicted for high treason, and upon the day appointed for their trial they appeared at the bar, wearing shirts with tuckers and open collars, in the manner usual with boys. When the chief justice of the King's Bench appeared in court to proceed with their trial, he remarked, " Well, Mr Attorney, I suppose you are ready to go on with the trial of these tuckered traitors ? " The attorney-general was quite prepared to proceed at once ; but, disgusted with the remark which had been made, he said, " No, my lord, I am not ready ; " and he added in a lower tone to the prisoners' counsel, " If I have any power to save the lives of these boys, whose extreme youth I did not before observe, that man shall never have the gratification of passing sentence upon one of these *tuckered* traitors." He performed his promise, and soon afterwards procured pardons for them all, upon condition of their going abroad. One of them, however, refused to accept the pardon upon the condition imposed ; and being obstinate, he was tried, convicted, and executed. After his death, it is said that his relatives, readily listening

to every misrepresentation which flattered their resentment, became persuaded that the attorney-general had selected him alone to suffer the utmost severity of the laws. One of these, a person named Shannon, was an insurgent of the 23rd July; and when Lord Kilwarden, hearing the popular cry of vengeance, exclaimed from his carriage, "It is I, Kilwarden, chief justice of the King's Bench," Shannon immediately cried out, "Then you are the man I want," and instantly plunged a pike into his lordship's body.

Whatever may be the truth or falsehood of this story, his lordship's death, there is no doubt, was the effect of the violence of the mob on this occasion; and it appears, that the fatal wound had scarcely been given, when a party of military reaching the spot, the people were put to flight, and his lordship's body rescued from further violence, and conveyed to Werburgh-street.

Major Swan soon after arrived, and in his fury at the attack upon so good a man, exclaimed indignantly, that every rebel taken with arms in his hands ought to be instantly hanged; when his lordship, who still lived, turned round, and impressively exhorted him "to let no man suffer but by the laws of his country." In a few minutes after, this great and good man expired.

For a few hours the rebels continued to skirmish with the military, and several men were killed. By morning, however, all appearance of rebellion had vanished, and large rewards were offered for the apprehension of the leader, Robert Emmet, who had escaped to the county of Wicklow, where he arrived in time to prevent a rising of the assembled rebels.

This unfortunate young man was every way an enthusiast; for his love was as extravagant as his patriotism. It appears that soon after his return



from France he visited at the house of Curran, the celebrated Irish barrister, and became attached to that gentleman's youngest daughter. Their affection was mutual, but unknown to Mr Curran. Upon the failure of the insurrection Emmet might easily have effected his departure from the kingdom, had he attended solely to his safety; but, in the same spirit of romantic enthusiasm which distinguished his short career, he could not submit to leave the country to which he could never more return, without making an effort to have one final interview with the object of his unfortunate attachment, in order to receive her personal forgiveness for what he now considered as the deepest injury. With a view of obtaining this last gratification, he selected a place of concealment midway between Mr Curran's country-house and Dublin; but before the meeting took place he was arrested. On his person were found some papers, which showed that he corresponded with Mr Curran's family, in consequence of which that gentleman's house was searched, and the letters there found were produced in evidence against him.

His trial came on, at the sessions house, Greenstreet, Dublin, September the 19th, 1803, before Lord Norbury; and the evidence being conclusive, his conviction followed. When called upon in the usual way, before passing sentence, he addressed the Court as follows:—

“ I am asked if I have anything to say why sentence of death should not be pronounced upon me. Was I to suffer only death, after being adjudged guilty, I should bow in silence; but a man in my situation has not only to combat with the difficulties of fortune, but with the difficulties of prejudice: the sentence of the law which delivers over his body to the executioner, consigns his character to obloquy. The man dies, but his memory lives; and

that mine may not forfeit all claim to the respect of my countrymen, I use this occasion to vindicate myself from some of the charges advanced against me.

“ I am charged with being an emissary of France : —’tis false ! I am no emissary—I did not wish to deliver up my country to a foreign power, and least of all, to France. No ! never did I entertain the idea of establishing French power in Ireland—God forbid ! On the contrary, it is evident from the introductory paragraph of the Address of the Provisional Government, that every hazard attending an independent effort was deemed preferable to the more fatal risk of introducing a French army into the country. Small would be our claims to patriotism and to sense, and palpable our affectation of the love of liberty, if we were to encourage the profanation of our shores by a people who are slaves themselves, and the unprincipled and abandoned instruments of imposing slavery on others. If such an inference be drawn from any part of the proclamation of the Provisional Government, it calumniates their views, and is not warranted by the fact.—How could they speak of freedom to their countrymen ? How assume such an exalted motive, and meditate the introduction of a power which has been the enemy of freedom in every part of the globe ? Reviewing the conduct of France to other countries, could we expect better towards us ? No ! Let not, then, any man attaint my memory by believing that I could have hoped for freedom through the aid of France, and betrayed the sacred cause of liberty, by committing it to the power of her most determined foe : had I done so, I had not deserved to live ; and dying with such a weight upon my character, I had merited the honest execration of that country which gave me birth, and to which I would have given freedom.

“ Had I been in Switzerland, I would have fought against the French—in the dignity of freedom, I would have expired on the threshold of that country, and they should have entered it only by passing over my lifeless corpse. Is it, then, to be supposed that I would be slow to make the same sacrifice to my native land? Am I, who lived but to be of service to my country, and who would subject myself to the bondage of the grave to give her independence—am I to be loaded with the foul and grievous calumny of being an emissary of France? My Lords, it may be part of the system of angry justice to bow a man’s mind by humiliation to meet the ignominy of the scaffold; but worse to me than the scaffold’s shame or the scaffold’s terrors, would be the imputation of having been the agent of French despotism and ambition; and while I have breath I will call upon my countrymen not to believe me guilty of so foul a crime against their liberties and their happiness.

“ Though you, my lord, sit there a judge, and I stand here a culprit, yet you are but a man, and I am another; I have a right therefore to vindicate my character and motives from the aspersions of calumny; and as a man to whom fame is dearer than life, I will make the last use of that life in rescuing my name and my memory from the afflictive imputation of having been an emissary of France, or seeking her interference in the internal regulation of our affairs.

“ Did I live to see a French army approach this country, I would meet it on the shore with a torch in one hand and a sword in the other—I would receive them with all the destruction of war! I would animate my countrymen to immolate them in their very boats; and before our native soil should be polluted by a foreign foe, if they succeeded in landing, I would burn every blade of



grass before them, raze every house, contend to the last for every inch of ground, and the last spot on which the hope of freedom should desert me, that spot I would make my grave : what I cannot do, I leave a legacy to my country, because I feel conscious that my death were unprofitable, and all hope of liberty extinct, the moment a French army obtained a footing in this land. God forbid that I should see my country under the hands of a foreign power. If the French should come as a foreign enemy, Oh ! my countrymen ! meet them on the shore with a torch in one hand, a sword in the other : receive them with all the destruction of war ; immolate them in their boats before our native soil shall be polluted by a foreign foe ! If they proceed in landing, fight them on the strand, burn every blade of grass before them as they advance—raze every house ; and if you are driven to the centre of your country, collect your provisions, your property, your wives, and your daughters ; form a circle around them—fight while but two men are left ; and when but one remains, let that man set fire to the pile, and release himself, and the families of his fallen countrymen, from the tyranny of France.

“ My lamp of life is nearly expired—my race is finished : the grave opens to receive me, and I sink into its bosom. All I request, then, at parting from the world, is the charity of its silence. Let no man write my epitaph ; for as no man, who knows my motives, dare vindicate them, let not prejudice or ignorance asperse them ; let them and me repose in obscurity and peace, and my tomb remain undescribed, till other times and other men can do justice to my character.”

Judgment was then passed on him in the usual form, and he was ordered for execution. On his return to Newgate he drew up a statement of the

insurrection, and the cause of its failure, which he requested might be sent to his brother, Thomas Addis, who was then at Paris.

The unfortunate young man, on the night before his execution, wrote to Mr Curran and his son Robert, excusing himself for his conduct towards Miss Curran, and the firmness and regularity of the original handwriting contain an affecting proof of the little influence which the approaching event exerted over his frame. The same enthusiasm which allured him to his destruction enabled him to support its utmost rigour. He met his fate with unostentatious fortitude; and although few could ever think of justifying his projects or regretting their failure, yet his youth, his talents, and the great respectability of his connections, and the evident delusion of which he was the victim, have excited more general sympathy for his unfortunate end, and more forbearance towards his memory, than is usually extended to the errors or sufferings of political offenders.

Moore, the celebrated Irish bard, has lamented his fate in the following melody:—

Oh! breathe not his name—let it sleep in the shade!  
 Where cold and unhonour'd his relics are laid!  
 Sad, silent, and dark, be the tears that we shed,  
 As the night-dew that falls on the grass o'er his head.

But the night-dew that falls, though in silence it weeps,  
 Shall brighten with verdure the grave where he sleeps;  
 And the tear that we shed, though in secret it rolls,  
 Shall long keep his memory green in our souls.

Several of Emmet's deluded followers met the fate of their leader, and by their ignominious deaths, taught their countrymen the folly and madness of attempting to separate Ireland from this kingdom by violent means.

The following pathetic history of Miss Curran, after the death of her lover, is extracted from

Washington Irving's "Sketch Book," in which it appears under the title of "The Broken Heart." It is rather long, but its beauty will amply repay the trouble of its perusal :—

"Every one must recollect the tragical story of young E——, the Irish patriot ; it was too touching to be soon forgotten. During the troubles in Ireland he was tried, condemned, and executed, on a charge of treason. His fate made a deep impression on public sympathy. He was so young—so intelligent—so generous—so brave—so everything that we are apt to like in a young man. His conduct under trial, too, was so lofty and intrepid ! The noble indignation with which he repelled the charge of treason against his country—the eloquent vindication of his name—and his pathetic appeal to posterity, in the hopeless hour of condemnation—all these entered deeply into every generous bosom, and even his enemies lamented the stern policy that dictated his execution.

"But there was one heart, whose anguish it would be impossible to describe. In happier days and fairer fortunes, he had won the affections of a beautiful and interesting girl, the daughter of a late celebrated Irish barrister. She loved him with the disinterested fervour of a woman's first and early love. When every worldly maxim arrayed itself against him ; when blasted in fortune, and disgrace and danger darkened around his name, she loved him the more ardently for his very sufferings. If, then, his fate could awaken the sympathy even of his foes, what must have been the agony of her whose soul was occupied by his image ! Let those tell who have had the portals of the tomb suddenly closed between them and the being they most loved on earth—who have sat at its threshold, as one shut out in a cold and lonely world, from whence all that was most lovely and loving had departed.



“ But then the horrors of such a grave ! so frightful, so dishonoured ! There was nothing for memory to dwell on that could soothe the pang of separation—none of those tender, though melancholy circumstances, that endear the parting scene—nothing to melt sorrow into those blessed tears, sent, like the dews of heaven, to revive the heart in the parching hour of anguish.

“ To render her widowed situation more desolate, she had incurred her father’s displeasure by her unfortunate attachment, and was an exile from the paternal roof. But could the sympathy and kind offices of friends have reached a spirit so shocked and driven in by horror, she would have experienced no want of consolation ; for the Irish are a people of quick and generous sensibilities. The most delicate and cherishing attentions were paid her by families of wealth and distinction. She was led into society, and they tried by all kinds of occupation and amusement to dissipate her grief, and wean her from the tragical story of her lover. But it was all in vain. There are some strokes of calamity that scathe and scorch the soul—that penetrate to the vital seat of happiness—and blast it, never again to put forth bud or blossom. She never objected to frequent the haunts of pleasure, but she was as much alone there as in the depth of solitude. She walked about in a sad reverie, apparently unconscious of the world around her. She carried with her an inward woe that mocked at all the blandishments of friendship, and ‘ heeded not the song of the charmer, charm he never so wisely.’

“ The person who told me her story had seen her at a masquerade. There can be no exhibition of far-gone wretchedness more striking and painful than to meet it in such a scene. To find it wandering like a spectre, lonely and joyless, where all around is gay—to see it dressed out in the trappings

of mirth, and looking so wan and woe-begone, as if it had tried in vain to cheat the poor heart into a momentary forgetfulness of sorrow. After strolling through the splendid rooms and giddy crowd with an utter air of abstraction, she sat herself down on the steps of an orchestra, and looking about some time with a vacant air, that showed her insensibility of the garish scene, she began, with the capriciousness of a sickly heart, to warble a little plaintive air. She had an exquisite voice ; but on this occasion it was so simple, so touching, it breathed forth such a soul of wretchedness, that she drew a crowd mute and silent around her, and melted every one into tears.

“ The story of one so true and tender could not but excite great interest in a country remarkable for enthusiasm. It completely won the heart of a brave officer, who paid his addresses to her, and thought that one so true to the dead could not but prove affectionate to the living. She declined his attentions, for her thoughts were irrevocably engrossed by the memory of her former lover. He, however, persisted in his suit. He solicited not her tenderness, but her esteem. He was assisted by her conviction of his worth, and her sense of her own destitute and dependent situation ; for she was existing on the kindness of her friends. In a word, he at length succeeded in gaining her hand, though with the solemn assurance that her heart was unalterably another’s.

“ He took her with him to Sicily, hoping that a change of scene might wear out the remembrance of early woes. She was an amiable and exemplary wife, and made an effort to be a happy one ; but nothing could cure the silent and devouring melancholy that had entered into her very soul. She wasted away in a slow, but hopeless decline ; and at length sank into the grave, the victim of a broken heart.”

## FRANCIS SMITH

### CONDEMNED FOR THE MURDER OF A SUPPOSED GHOST

THE Hammersmith Ghost was long remembered by every one. Its vagaries and mischievous pranks were in some cases productive of very serious consequences, and in no instance were more melancholy effects produced than in that of the unfortunate prisoner, whose case is now before us, who shot a poor man, who offended only in wearing the garb of his trade at night, and who was afterwards tried and condemned to death for the offence.

Among the other evil effects produced by the absurd proceedings of the ghost, it appears that one poor woman in particular, who was far advanced in her pregnancy of a second child, was so much shocked on seeing him, that she took to her bed, and survived only two days. She had been crossing near the churchyard about ten o'clock at night, when she beheld something, as she described, rise from the tomb-stones. The figure was very tall, and very white. She attempted to run, but the ghost soon overtook her, and, pressing her in his arms, she fainted, and fell to the ground. In this situation she remained some hours, till discovered by some neighbours, who kindly led her home, when she took to her bed, from which she never rose.

The ghost had so much alarmed a waggoner, belonging to Mr Russel, driving a team of eight



horses, and which had sixteen passengers at the time, that the driver took to his heels, and left the waggon and horses so precipitately, that the whole were greatly endangered.

Francis Smith, the subject of this sketch, doubtless incensed at the unknown person who was in the habit of assuming this supernatural character, and thus frightening the superstitious inhabitants of the village, rashly determined on watching for, and shooting the ghost; when unfortunately he shot a poor man, named Thomas Milwood, a bricklayer, who was in a white dress, the usual habiliment of his occupation. This rash act having been judged wilful murder by the coroner's inquest, Smith was committed to jail, and took his trial at the ensuing sessions at the Old Bailey, on the 13th January, 1804.

The evidence adduced was, that the unfortunate deceased had quitted the residence of his father and mother only five minutes before he was killed; and that, as he was passing along Black Lion-lane, the prisoner saw him and called out, "Damn you, who are you? I'll shoot you, if you don't speak." No answer was returned, and the prisoner then fired and the contents of his gun struck the deceased on the jaw, and he fell down dead. The prisoner immediately went in search of assistance, but it was found to be too late, and he then surrendered himself into custody. It afterwards proved that he had agreed with a watchman to go in search of the ghost; and that his only object was to rid the neighbourhood of the visitor, who had occasioned so much mischievous alarm.

The defence set up was that no bad design actuated the prisoner in his attack upon the supposed spirit, and many witnesses were called, who proved the alarm which had been occasioned by the visits of a preternatural being.

The Lord Chief Baron, Mr Justice Rooke, and Mr Justice Lawrence, who were on the Bench, severally expressed their opinion, that the case proved amounted to murder; and that if a man killed another by design, without authority, but from a supposition that he ought to be killed, the offence amounted to murder. The Jury attempted to bring in a verdict of manslaughter only, but the opinion of the learned Judges being repeated they returned a general verdict of guilty, and recommended the prisoner to mercy.

The Recorder then passed sentence of death on the prisoner in the usual form; which was, that he should be executed on the following Monday, and his body given over to the surgeons to be dissected.

The prisoner, who was dressed in a suit of black clothes, was twenty-nine years of age, a short but well-made man, with dark hair and eye-brows; and the pallid hue of his countenance, during the whole trial, together with all the signs of contrition which he exhibited, commanded the sympathy of every spectator.

The case excited great interest, and the Court and its environs were crowded during the trial, by persons anxious to learn his fate.

The Lord Chief Baron having told the jury, after they had given their verdict, that he would immediately report the case to his Majesty, was so speedy in this humane office, that a respite during pleasure was sent to the Old Bailey before seven o'clock, and on the twenty-fifth, the prisoner received a pardon on condition of his being imprisoned during one year.

The ghost appears to have taken alarm at the consequences of his absurd trifling with the feelings of his fellow subjects, and he was not again seen.

We cannot dismiss this subject without referring to other cases of supposed ghosts, which in their

time attracted no inconsiderable portion of public attention, and excited no small degree of alarm. The most famous of these was known by the name of the "Cock Lane Ghost," and the circumstances connected with the case are so curious, and afford so fair a specimen of the easy credulity even of well-informed and otherwise sensible people, that we feel little hesitation in placing an account of them before our readers.

The Cock Lane Ghost kept London in a state of commotion for no short time, and was the universal theme of conversation among the learned and the illiterate, and in every circle of society, "from the prince to the peasant." It appears that at the commencement of the year 1760, there resided in Cock Lane, near West Smithfield, in the house of one Parsons, the parish clerk of St Sepulchre's, a stockbroker, named Kent. The wife of this gentleman had died in child-bed during the previous year; and his sister-in-law, Miss Fanny, had arrived from Norfolk to keep his house for him. They soon conceived a mutual affection, and each of them made a will in the other's favour. They lived for some months in the house of Parsons, who, being a needy man, borrowed money of his lodger. Some differences arose betwixt them, and Mr Kent left the house, and instituted legal proceedings against the parish clerk for the recovery of his money.

While this matter was yet pending, Miss Fanny was suddenly taken ill of the small-pox, and, notwithstanding every care and attention, she died in a few days, and was buried in a vault under Clerkenwell church. Parsons now began to hint that the poor lady had come unfairly by her death, and that Mr Kent was accessory to it, from his too great eagerness to enter into possession of the property she had bequeathed him. Nothing further was said for nearly two years; but it would appear that



Parsons was of so revengeful a character, that he had never forgotten or forgiven his differences with Mr Kent, and the indignity of having been sued for the borrowed money. The strong passions of pride and avarice were silently at work during all that interval, hatching schemes of revenge, but dismissing them one after the other as impracticable, until, at last, a notable one suggested itself. About the beginning of the year 1762, the alarm was spread over all the neighbourhood of Cock Lane, that the house of Parsons was haunted by the ghost of poor Fanny, and that the daughter of Parsons, a girl about twelve years of age, had several times seen and conversed with the spirit, who had, moreover, informed her, that she had not died of the small-pox, as was currently reported, but of poison, administered by Mr Kent. Parsons, who originated, took good care to countenance these reports; and, in answer to numerous inquiries, said his house was every night, and had been for two years—in fact ever since the death of Fanny, troubled by a loud knocking at the doors and in the walls. Having thus prepared the ignorant and credulous neighbours to believe or exaggerate for themselves what he had told them, he sent for a gentleman of a higher class in life, to come and witness these extraordinary occurrences. The gentleman came accordingly, and found the daughter of Parsons, to whom the spirit alone appeared, and whom alone it answered, in bed, trembling violently, having just seen the ghost, and been again informed that she had died from poison. A loud knocking was also heard from every part of the chamber, which so mystified the not very clear understanding of the visitor, that he departed, afraid to doubt and ashamed to believe, but with a promise to bring the clergyman of the parish and several other gentlemen on the following day, to report upon the mystery.

On the following night he returned, bringing with him three clergymen, and about twenty other persons, including two negroes, when, upon a consultation with Parsons, they resolved to sit up the whole night, and await the ghost's arrival. It was then explained by Parsons, that although the ghost would never render itself visible to anybody but his daughter, it had no objection to answer the questions that might be put to it by any person present, and that it expressed an affirmation by one knock, a negative by two, and its displeasure by a kind of scratching. The child was then put into bed along with her sister, and the clergymen examined the bed and bed-clothes to satisfy themselves that no trick was played, by knocking upon any substance concealed among the clothes, as, on the previous night, the bed was observed to shake violently.

After some hours, during which they all waited with exemplary patience, the mysterious knocking was heard in the wall, and the child declared that she saw the ghost of poor Fanny. The following questions were then gravely put by the clergyman, through the medium of one Mary Frazer, the servant of Parsons, and to whom it was said the deceased lady had been much attached. The answers were in the usual fashion, by a knock or knocks :—

“ Do you make this disturbance on account of the ill usage you received from Mr Kent ? ”—“ Yes.”

“ Were you brought to an untimely end by poison ? ”—“ Yes.”

“ How was the poison administered, in beer or in purl ? ”—“ In purl.”

“ How long was that before your death ? ”—“ About three hours.”

“ Can your former servant, Carrots, give any information about the poison ? ”—“ Yes.”

“ Are you Kent's wife's sister ? ”—“ Yes.”

"Were you married to Kent after your sister's death?"—"No."

"Was anybody else, besides Kent, concerned in your murder?"—"No."

"Can you, if you like, appear visibly to any one?"—"Yes."

"Will you do so?"—"Yes."

"Can you go out of this house?"—"Yes."

"Is it your intention to follow this child about everywhere?"—"Yes."

"Are you pleased in being asked these questions?"—"Yes."

"Does it ease your troubled soul?"—"Yes."

[Here there was heard a mysterious noise, which some wiseacre present compared to the fluttering of wings.]

"How long before your death did you tell your servant, Carrots, that you were poisoned?—An hour?"—"Yes."

[Carrots, who was present, was appealed to; but she stated positively that such was not the fact, as the deceased was quite speechless an hour before her death. This shook the faith of some of the spectators, but the examination was allowed to continue.]

"How long did Carrots live with you?"—"Three or four days."

[Carrots was again appealed to, and said that this was true.]

"If Mr Kent is arrested for this murder, will he confess?"—"Yes."

"Would your soul be at rest if he were hanged for it?"—"Yes."

"Will he be hanged for it?"—"Yes."

"How long a time first?"—"Three years."

"How many clergymen are there in this room?"—"Three."

"How many negroes?"—"Two."



“ Is this watch (held up by one of the clergymen) white ? ”—“ No.”

“ Is it yellow ? ”—“ No.”

“ Is it blue ? ”—“ No.”

“ Is it black ? ”—“ Yes.”

[The watch was in a black shagreen case.]

“ At what time this morning will you take your departure ? ”

The answer to this question was four knocks, very distinctly heard by every person present ; and accordingly, at four o'clock precisely, the ghost took its departure to the Wheatsheaf public-house, close by, where it frightened mine host and his lady almost out of their wits by knocking in the ceiling right above their bed.

The rumour of these occurrences very soon spread over London, and every day Cock-lane was rendered impassable by the crowds of people who assembled around the house of the parish clerk, in expectation of either seeing the ghost or of hearing the mysterious knocks. It was at last found necessary, so clamorous were they for admission within the haunted precincts, to admit those only who would pay a certain fee ; an arrangement which was very convenient to the needy and money-loving Mr Parsons. Indeed, things had taken a turn greatly to his satisfaction ; he not only had his revenge, but he made a profit out of it. The ghost, in consequence, played its antics every night, to the great amusement of many hundreds of people, and the great perplexity of a still greater number.

Unhappily, however, for the parish clerk, the ghost was induced to make some promises which were the means of utterly destroying its reputation. It promised, in answer to the questions of the Reverend Mr Aldritch of Clerkenwell, that it would not only follow the little Miss Parsons wherever she

went, but would also attend him, or any other gentleman, into the vault under St John's Church, where the body of the murdered woman was deposited, and would there give notice of its presence by a distinct knock upon the coffin. As a preliminary, the girl was conveyed to the house of Mr Aldritch near the church, where a large party of ladies and gentlemen, eminent for their acquirements, their rank, or their wealth, had assembled. About ten o'clock on the night of the 1st of February, the girl, having been brought from Cock-lane in a coach, was put to bed by several ladies in the house of Mr Aldritch, a strict examination having been previously made that nothing was hidden in the bedclothes. While the gentlemen, in an adjoining chamber, were deliberating whether they should proceed in a body to the vault, they were summoned into the bedroom by the ladies, who affirmed, in great alarm, that the ghost was come, and that they heard the knocks and scratches. The gentlemen entered accordingly, with a determination to suffer no deception. The little girl, on being asked whether she saw the ghost, replied, "No; but she felt it on her back like a mouse." She was then required to put her hands out of bed, and these being held by some of the ladies, the spirit was summoned in the usual manner to answer, if it were in the room. The question was several times put with great solemnity; but the customary knock was not heard in reply in the walls, neither was there any scratching. The ghost was then asked to render itself visible, but it did not choose to grant the request. It was next solicited to give some token of its presence by a sound of any sort, or by touching the hand or cheek of any lady or gentleman in the room; but even with this request the ghost would not comply.

There was now a considerable pause, and one of

the clergymen went down-stairs to interrogate the father of the girl, who was waiting the result of the experiment. He positively denied that there was any deception, and even went so far as to say that he himself, upon one occasion, had seen and conversed with the awful ghost. This having been communicated to the company, it was unanimously resolved to give the ghost another trial; and the clergyman called out in a loud voice to the supposed spirit that the gentleman to whom it had promised to appear in the vault was about to repair to that place, where he claimed the fulfilment of its promise. At one hour after midnight they all proceeded to the church, and the gentleman in question, with another, entered the vault alone, and took up their position alongside of the coffin of poor Fanny. The ghost was then summoned to appear, but it appeared not; it was summoned to knock, but it knocked not; it was summoned to scratch, but it scratched not; and the two retired from the vault, with the firm belief that the whole business was a deception practised by Parsons and his daughter. There were others, however, who did not wish to jump so hastily to a conclusion, and who suggested that they were, perhaps, trifling with this awful and supernatural being, which, being offended with them for their presumption, would not condescend to answer them. Again, after a serious consultation, it was agreed on all hands that, if the ghost answered anybody at all, it would answer Mr Kent, the supposed murderer; and he was accordingly requested to go down into the vault. He went with several others, and summoned the ghost to answer whether he had indeed poisoned her. There being no answer, the question was put by Mr Aldritch, who conjured it, if it were indeed a spirit, to end their doubts—make a sign of its presence, and point out the guilty person. There being still



no answer for the space of half an hour, during which time all these boobies waited with the most praiseworthy perseverance, they returned to the house of Mr Aldritch, and ordered the girl to get up and dress herself. She was strictly examined, but persisted in her statement that she used no deception, and that the ghost had really appeared to her.

So many persons had, by their openly expressed belief of the reality of the visitation, identified themselves with it, that Parsons and his family were far from being the only persons interested in the continuance of the delusion. The result of the experiment convinced most people ; but these were not to be convinced by any evidence, however positive, and they therefore spread about the rumour, that the ghost had not appeared in the vault, because Mr Kent had taken care beforehand to have the coffin removed. That gentleman, whose position was a very painful one, immediately procured competent witnesses, in whose presence the vault was entered, and the coffin of poor Fanny opened. Their deposition was then published ; and Mr Kent indicted Parsons and his wife, his daughter, Mary Frazer the servant, the Rev Mr Moor, and a tradesman, two of the most prominent patrons of the deception, for a conspiracy. The trial came on in the Court of King's Bench, on the 10th of July, before Lord Chief-Justice Mansfield, when, after an investigation which lasted twelve hours, the whole of the conspirators were found guilty. The Rev Mr Moor and his friend were severely reprimanded in open court, and recommended to make some pecuniary compensation to the prosecutor for the aspersions they had been instrumental in throwing upon his character. Parsons was sentenced to stand three times in the pillory, and to be imprisoned for two years : his

wife to one year's, and his servant to six months' imprisonment in the Bridewell. A printer, who had been employed by them to publish an account of the proceedings for their profit, was also fined fifty pounds, and discharged.

The precise manner in which the deception was carried on has never been explained. The knocking in the wall appears to have been the work of Parsons' wife, while the scratching part of the business was left to the little girl. That any contrivance so clumsy could have deceived anybody, cannot fail to excite our wonder. But thus it always is. If two or three persons can only be found to take the lead in any absurdity, however great, there is sure to be plenty of imitators. Like sheep in a field, if one clears the stile, the rest will follow.

About ten years afterwards, London was again alarmed by the story of a haunted house. Stockwell, near Vauxhall, the scene of the antics of this new ghost, became almost as celebrated in the annals of superstition as Cock Lane. Mrs Golding, an elderly lady, who resided alone with her servant, Anne Robinson, was sorely surprised on the evening of Twelfth-day, 1772, to observe a most extraordinary commotion among her crockery. Cups and saucers rattled down the chimney—pots and pans were whirled down-stairs, or through the windows; and hams, cheeses, and loaves of bread disported themselves upon the floor as if the devil were in them. This, at least, was the conclusion that Mrs Golding came to; and being greatly alarmed, she invited some of her neighbours to stay with her, and protect her from the evil one. Their presence, however, did not put a stop to the insurrection of china, and every room in the house was in a short time strewed with the fragments. The chairs and tables joined, at last, in the tumult, and things looked altogether so serious and inexplicable,

that the neighbours, dreading that the house itself would next be seized with a fit of motion, and tumble about their ears, left poor Mrs Golding to bear the brunt of it by herself. The ghost in this case was solemnly remonstrated with, and urged to take its departure; but the demolition continuing as great as before, Mrs Golding finally made up her mind to quit the house altogether. She took refuge with Anne Robinson in the house of a neighbour; but his glass and crockery being immediately subjected to the same persecution, he was reluctantly compelled to give her notice to quit. The old lady, thus forced back to her own house, endured the disturbance for some days longer, when suspecting that Anne Robinson was the cause of all the mischief, she dismissed her from her service. The extraordinary appearances immediately ceased, and were never afterwards renewed; a fact which is of itself sufficient to point out the real disturber. A long time afterwards, Anne Robinson confessed the whole matter to the Rev Mr Brayfield. This gentleman confided the story to Mr Hone, who has published an explanation of the mystery. Anne, it appears, was anxious to have a clear house, to carry on an intrigue with her lover, and resorted to this trick to effect her purpose. She placed the china on the shelves in such a manner that it fell on the slightest motion, and attached horse-hairs to other articles, so that she could jerk them down from an adjoining room without being perceived by any one. She was exceedingly dexterous at this sort of work, and would have proved a formidable rival to many a juggler by profession.

In later days, the alarming vagaries of "Swing," and "Spring-heeled Jack," have occasioned scarcely less alarm. Their claims to supernatural powers have not been supported by such plausible evidence



as those of any of the ghosts which we have yet named, but their proceedings have been no less troublesome and mischievous to the well-disposed of the subjects of this realm.

One or two anecdotes with regard to haunted houses, though rather beside the immediate object of this work, may yet prove interesting, as illustrative of the general subject of ghosts, and the degree of belief to be put in such supernatural visitors.

One of the best stories which we recollect to have heard of a haunted house, is that which is related of the Royal Palace at Woodstock, in the year 1649, when the commissioners sent down from London by the Long Parliament to take possession of it, and efface all the emblems of royalty about it, were fairly driven out by their fear of the devil, and the annoyances they suffered from a roguish cavalier, who played the imp to admiration. The commissioners, dreading at that time no devil, arrived at Woodstock on the 13th of October 1649. They took up their lodgings in the late King's apartments—turned the beautiful bed-rooms and withdrawing-rooms into kitchens and sculleries—the council-hall into a brewhouse, and made the dining-room a place to keep firewood in. They pulled down all the insignia of royal state, and treated with the utmost indignity everything that recalled to their memory the name or the majesty of Charles Stuart. One Giles Sharp accompanied them in the capacity of clerk, and seconded their efforts apparently with the greatest zeal. He aided them to uproot a noble old tree, merely because it was called the King's Oak, and tossed the fragments into the dining-room to make cheerful fires for the commissioners. During the first two days they heard some strange noises about the house, but they paid no great attention to them. On the third, however, they began to suspect they had got into bad company; for they

heard, as they thought, a supernatural dog under their bed, which gnawed their bedclothes. On the next day the chairs and tables began to dance, apparently of their own accord. On the fifth day, something came into the bedchamber and walked up and down, and fetching the warming-pan out of the withdrawing-room, made so much noise with it that they thought five church bells were ringing in their ears. On the sixth day, the plates and dishes were thrown up and down the dining-room. On the seventh, they penetrated into the bed-room in company with several logs of wood, and usurped the soft pillows intended for the commissioners. On the eighth and ninth nights, there was a cessation of hostilities; but on the tenth the bricks in the chimneys became locomotive, and rattled and danced about the floors, and round the heads of the commissioners all the night long. On the eleventh, the demon ran away with their breeches; and on the twelfth filled their beds so full of pewter platters that they could not get into them. On the thirteenth night, the glass became unaccountably seized with a fit of cracking, and fell into shivers in all parts of the house. On the fourteenth, there was a noise as if forty pieces of artillery had been fired off, and a shower of pebble-stones, which so alarmed the commissioners, that, "struck with great horror, they cried out to one another for help."

They first of all tried the efficacy of prayers to drive away the evil spirits; but these proving unavailing, they began seriously to reflect whether it would not be much better to leave the place altogether to the devil that inhabited it. They ultimately resolved, however, to try it a little longer; and having craved forgiveness of all their sins, betook themselves to bed. That night they slept in tolerable comfort, but it was merely a trick of

their tormentor to lull them into false security. When, on the succeeding night, they heard no noises, they began to flatter themselves that the devil was driven out, and prepared accordingly to take up their quarters for the whole winter in the palace. These symptoms on their part became the signal for renewed uproar among the fiends. On the 1st of November, they heard something walking with a slow and solemn pace up and down the withdrawing-room, and immediately afterwards a shower of stones, bricks, mortar, and broken glass pelted about their ears. On the 2nd the steps were again heard in the withdrawing-room, sounding to their fancy very much like the treading of an enormous bear, which continued for about a quarter of an hour. This noise having ceased, a large warming-pan was thrown violently upon the table, followed by a number of stones, and the jawbone of a horse. Some of the boldest walked valiantly into the withdrawing-room, armed with swords and pistols, but could discover nothing. They were afraid that night to go to sleep, and sat up, making fires in every room, and burning candles and lamps in great abundance; thinking that, as the fiends loved darkness, they would not disturb a company surrounded with so much light. They were deceived, however: buckets of water came down the chimneys and extinguished the fires, and the candles were blown out, they knew not how. Some of the servants who had betaken themselves to bed were drenched with putrid ditch-water as they lay; and arose in great fright, muttering incoherent prayers, and exposing to the wondering eyes of the commissioners their linen all dripping with green moisture, and their knuckles red with the blows they had at the same time received from some invisible tormentors. While they were still speaking, there was a noise like the loudest thunder, or the



firing of a whole park of artillery ; upon which they all fell down upon their knees and implored the protection of the Almighty. One of the commissioners then arose, the others still kneeling, and asked in a courageous voice, and in the name of God, who was there, and what they had done that they should be troubled in that manner. No answer was returned, and the noises ceased for a while. At length, however, as the commissioners said, " the devil came again, and brought with it seven devils worse than itself." Being again in darkness, they lighted a candle and placed it in the doorway that it might throw a light upon the two chambers at once ; but it was suddenly blown out, and one commissioner said that he had " seen the similitude of a horse's hoof striking the candle and candlestick into the middle of the chamber, and afterwards making three escapes on the snuff to put it out." Upon this, the same person was so bold as to draw his sword ; but he asserted positively that he had hardly withdrawn it from the scabbard before an invisible hand seized hold of it and tugged with him for it, and prevailing, struck him so violent a blow with the pommel that he was quite stunned. Then the noises began again ; upon which, with one accord, they all retired into the presence-chamber, where they passed the night, praying and singing psalms.

They were by this time convinced that it was useless to struggle any longer with the powers of evil, that seemed determined to make Woodstock their own. These things happened on the Saturday night ; and, being repeated on the Sunday, they determined to leave the place immediately, and return to London. By Tuesday morning early, all their preparations were completed ; and shaking the dust off their feet, and devoting Woodstock and all its inhabitants to the infernal gods, they finally took their departure.

Many years elapsed before the true cause of these disturbances was discovered. It was ascertained, at the Restoration, that the whole was the work of Giles Sharp, the trusty clerk of the commissioners. This man, whose real name was Joseph Collins, was a concealed royalist, and had passed his early life within the bowers of Woodstock ; so that he knew every hole and corner of the place, and the numerous trap-doors and secret passages that abounded in the building. The commissioners, never suspecting the true state of his opinions, but believing him to be revolutionary to the back bone, placed the utmost reliance upon him ; a confidence which he abused in the manner above detailed, to his own great amusement, and that of the few cavaliers whom he let into the secret.

Quite as extraordinary and as cleverly managed was the trick played off at Tedworth, in 1661, at the house of Mr Mompesson, and which is so circumstantially narrated by the Rev Joseph Glanvil, under the title of " The Demon of Tedworth," and appended, among other proofs of witchcraft, to his noted work, called " Sadducismus Triumphatus." About the middle of April, in the year above mentioned, Mr Mompesson, having returned to his house at Tedworth, from a journey he had taken to London, was informed by his wife that during his absence they had been troubled with the most extraordinary noises. Three nights afterwards he heard the noise himself ; and it appeared to him to be that of " a great knocking at his doors, and on the outside of his walls." He immediately arose, dressed himself, took down a pair of pistols, and walked valiantly forth to discover the disturber, under the impression that it must be a robber ; but, as he went, the noise seemed to travel before or behind him ; and, when he arrived at the door from which he thought it proceeded, he saw nothing, but still

heard "a strange hollow sound." He puzzled his brains for a long time, and searched every corner of the house ; but, discovering nothing, he went to bed again. He was no sooner snug under the clothes, than the noise began again more furiously than ever, sounding very much like a "thumping and drumming on the top of his house, and then by degrees going off into the air."

These things continued for several nights, when it came to the recollection of Mr Mompesson that, some time before, he had given orders for the arrest and imprisonment of a wandering drummer, who went about the country with a large drum, disturbing quiet people and soliciting alms, and that he had detained the man's drum, and that, probably, the drummer was a wizard, and had sent evil spirits to haunt his house, to be revenged of him. He became strengthened in his opinion every day, especially when the noises assumed, to his fancy, a resemblance to the beating of a drum, "like that at the breaking up of a guard." Mrs Mompesson being brought to bed, the devil, or the drummer, very kindly and considerately refrained from making the usual riot ; but, as soon as she recovered strength, began again, "in a ruder manner than before, following and vexing the young children, and beating their bedsteads with so much violence that every one expected they would fall in pieces." For an hour together, as the worthy Mr Mompesson repeated to his wondering neighbours, this infernal drummer "would beat 'Roundheads and Cuckolds,' the 'Tattoo,' and several other points of war, as cleverly as any soldier." When this had lasted long enough, he changed his tactics, and scratched with his iron talons under the children's bed. "On the 5th of November," says the Rev Joseph Glanvil, "it made a mighty noise ; and a servant, observing two boards in the children's room seeming to move,



he bid it give him one of them. Upon which the board came (nothing moving it, that he saw) within a yard of him. The man added, 'Nay, let me have it in my hand;' upon which the spirit, devil, or drummer, pushed it towards him so close, that he might touch it. This," continues Glanvil, "was in the day-time, and was seen by a whole room-full of people. That morning it left a sulphurous smell behind it, which was very offensive. At night the minister, one Mr Cragg, and several of the neighbours, came to the house on a visit. Mr Cragg went to prayers with them, kneeling at the children's bedside, where it then became very troublesome and loud. During prayer-time, the spirit withdrew into the cock-loft, but returned as soon as prayers were done; and then, in sight of the company, the chairs walked about the room of themselves, the children's shoes were hurled over their heads, and every loose thing moved about the chamber. At the same time, a bed-staff was thrown at the minister, which hit him on the leg, but so favourably, that a lock of wool could not have fallen more softly." On another occasion, the blacksmith of the village, a fellow who cared neither for ghost nor devil, slept with John the footman, that he also might hear the disturbance, and be cured of his incredulity, when there "came a noise in the room, as if one had been shoeing a horse, and somewhat came, as it were, with a pair of pinchers," snipping and snapping at the poor blacksmith's nose the greater part of the night. Next day it came, panting like a dog out of breath; upon which some woman present took a bed-staff to knock at it, "which was caught suddenly out of her hand, and thrown away; and company coming up, the room was presently filled with a *bloomy noisome smell*, and was very hot, though without fire, in a very sharp and severe winter. It continued in the bed, panting

and scratching for an hour and a half, and then went into the next room, where it knocked a little, and seemed to rattle a chain."

The rumour of these wonderful occurrences soon spread all over the country, and people from far and near flocked to the haunted house of Tedworth, to believe or doubt, as their natures led them, but all filled with intense curiosity. It appears, too, that the fame of these events reached the royal ear, and that some gentlemen were sent by the King to investigate the circumstances, and draw up a report of what they saw or heard. Whether the royal commissioners were more sensible men than the neighbours of Mr Mompesson, and required more clear and positive evidence than they, or whether the powers with which they were armed to punish anybody who might be found carrying on this deception frightened the evil-doers, is not certain; but Glanvil himself confesses, that all the time they were in the house the noises ceased, and nothing was heard or seen. "However," says he, "as to the quiet of the house when the courtiers were there, the intermission may have been accidental, or perhaps the demon was not willing to give so public a testimony of those transactions which might possibly convince those whom he had rather should continue in unbelief of his existence."

As soon as the royal commissioners took their departure, the infernal drummer re-commenced his antics, and hundreds of persons were daily present to hear and wonder. Mr Mompesson's servant was so fortunate as not only to hear, but to see this pertinacious demon; for it came and stood at the foot of his bed. The exact shape and proportion of it he could not discover; but "he saw a great body, with two red and glaring eyes, which, for some time, were fixed steadily on him, and at length disappeared." Innumerable were the antics it played.

Once it purred like a cat ; beat the children's legs black and blue ; put a long spike into Mr Mompesson's bed, and a knife into his mother's ; filled the porringers with ashes ; hid a Bible under the grate ; and turned the money black in people's pockets. " One night," says Mr Mompesson, " there were seven or eight of these devils in the shape of men, who, as soon as a gun was fired, would shuffle away into an arbour ;" a circumstance which might have convinced Mr Mompesson of the mortal nature of his persecutors, if he had not been of the number of those worse than blind, who shut their eyes, and refuse to see.

In the mean time, the drummer, the supposed cause of all the mischief, passed his time in Gloucester gaol, whither he had been committed as a rogue and a vagabond. Being visited one day by some person from the neighbourhood of Tedworth, he asked what was the news in Wiltshire, and whether people did not talk a great deal about a drumming in a gentleman's house there ? The visitor replied, that he heard of nothing else ; upon which the drummer observed, " I have done it ; I have thus plagued him ! and he shall never be quiet until he hath made me satisfaction for taking away my drum." No doubt the fellow, who seems to have been a gipsy, spoke the truth, and that the gang of which he was a member knew more about the noises at Mr Mompesson's house than anybody else. Upon these words, however, he was brought to trial at Salisbury for witchcraft ; and, being found guilty, was sentenced to transportation ; a sentence which, for its leniency, excited no little wonder in that age, when such an accusation, whether proved or not, generally insured the stake or the gibbet. Glanvil says, that the noises ceased immediately the drummer was sent beyond the seas ; but that, somehow or other, he managed to



return from transportation,—“by raising storms and affrighting the seamen, it was said;” when the disturbances were forthwith renewed, and continued at intervals for several years. It was believed by many at the time, that Mr Mompesson himself was privy to the whole matter, and permitted and encouraged these tricks in his house for the sake of notoriety; but it seems more probable that the gipsies were the real delinquents, and that Mr Mompesson was as much alarmed and bewildered as his credulous neighbours, whose excited imaginations conjured up no small portion of these stories,—

“Which roll'd, and, as they roll'd, grew larger every hour.”

Many instances of a similar kind, during the seventeenth century, might be gleaned from Glanvil and other writers of that period; but they do not differ sufficiently from these to justify a detail of them.

## MARY BATEMAN

*Commonly called the Yorkshire Witch*

EXECUTED FOR MURDER

THE insidious arts practised by this woman rendered her a pest to the neighbourhood in which she resided, and she richly deserved that fate which eventually befell her.

She was indicted at York on the 18th of March, 1809, for the wilful murder of Rebecca Perigo, of Bramley, in the same county, in the month of May in the previous year.

The examination of the witnesses, who were called to support the case for the prosecution, showed, that Mrs Bateman resided at Leeds, and was well known at that place, as well as in the surrounding districts, as a "witch," in which capacity she had been frequently employed to work cures of "evil wishes," and all the other customary imaginary illnesses, to which the credulous lower orders at that time supposed themselves liable. Her name had become much celebrated in the neighbourhood for her successes in the arts of divining and witchcraft, and it may be readily concluded that her efforts in her own behalf were no less profitable. In the spring of 1806 Mrs Perigo, who lived with her husband, at Bramley, a village at a short distance from Leeds, was seized with a "flacking," or fluttering in her breast, whenever she lay down, and applying to a quack doctor of the place, he assured her that it was beyond his cure, for that an "evil wish" had

been laid upon her, and that the arts of sorcery must be resorted to in order to effect her relief. While in this dilemma, she was visited by her niece, a girl named Stead, who at that time filled a situation as a household servant at Leeds, and who had taken advantage of the Whitsuntide holidays to go round to see her friends. Stead expressed her sorrow to find her aunt in so terrible a situation, and recommended an immediate appeal to the prisoner, whose powers she described as fully equal to get rid of any affection of the kind, whether produced by mortal or diabolical charms. An application was at once determined on to her, and Stead was employed to broach the subject to the diviner. She, in consequence, paid the prisoner a visit at her house in Black Dog Yard, near the bank, at Leeds, and having acquainted her with the nature of the malady by which her aunt was affected, was informed by her, that she knew a lady, who lived at Scarborough, and that if a flannel petticoat or some article of dress, which was worn next the skin of the patient, was sent to her, she would communicate with her upon the subject. On the following Tuesday William Perigo, the husband of the deceased, proceeded to her house, and having handed over his wife's flannel petticoat, the prisoner said that she would write to Miss Blythe, who was the lady to whom she had alluded, at Scarborough, by the same night's post, and that an answer would doubtless be returned by that day week, when he was to call again. On the day mentioned, Perigo was true to his appointment, and the prisoner produced to him a letter, saying that it had arrived from Miss Blythe, and that it contained directions as to what was to be done. After a great deal of circumlocution and mystery the letter was opened, and was read by the prisoner, and it was found that it contained an order " that Mary Bateman should go



to Perigo's house, at Bramley, and should take with her four guinea notes, which were enclosed, and that she should sew them into the four corners of the bed, in which the diseased woman slept, where they were to remain for eighteen months; that Perigo was to give her four other notes of like value, to be returned to Scarborough; and that unless all these directions were strictly attended to, the charm would be useless and would not work." On the fourth of August the prisoner went over to Bramley, and having shown the four notes, proceeded apparently to sew them up in silken bags, which she delivered over to Mrs Perigo to be placed in the bed. The four notes desired to be returned were then handed to her by Perigo, and she retired, directing her dupes frequently to send to her house, as letters might be expected from Miss Blythe. In about another fortnight, another letter was produced; and it contained directions, that two pieces of iron in the form of horse-shoes should be nailed up at Perigo's door, by the prisoner, but that the nails should not be driven in with a hammer, but with the back of a pair of pincers, and that the pincers were to be sent to Scarborough, to remain in the custody of Miss Blythe for the eighteen months already mentioned in the charm. The prisoner accordingly again visited Bramley, and having nailed up the horse-shoes received and carried off the pincers. In October the following letter was received by Perigo, bearing the signature of the supposed Miss Blythe.

"My dear Friend.—You must go down to Mary Bateman's, at Leeds, on Tuesday next, and carry two guinea notes with you and give her them, and she will give you the other two that I have sent to her from Scarborough; and you must buy me a small cheese about six or eight pound weight, and it must be of your buying, for it is for a particular

use, and it is to be carried down to Mary Bateman's, and she will send it to me by the coach.—This letter is to be burned when you have done reading it.”

From this time to the month of March, 1807, a great number of letters were received, demanding the transmission of various articles, to Miss Blythe, through the medium of the prisoner, the whole of which were to be preserved by her until the expiration of the eighteen months; and in the course of the same period money to the amount of near seventy pounds was paid over, Perigo, upon each occasion of payment, receiving silk bags, containing what were pretended to be coins or notes of corresponding value, which were to be sewn up in the bed as before. In March, 1807, the following letter arrived:—

“ My dear Friends.—I will be obliged to you if you will let me have half-a-dozen of your china, three silver spoons, half-a-pound of tea, two pounds of loaf sugar, and a tea canister to put the tea in, or else it will not do—I durst not drink out of my own china. You must burn this with a candle.”

The china, &c., not having been sent, in the month of April Miss Blythe wrote as follows:—

“ My dear Friends.—*I will be obliged to you if you will buy me a camp bedstead, bed and bedding, a blanket, a pair of sheets, and a long bolster must come from your house.*—You need not buy the best feathers, common ones will do. I have laid on the floor for three nights, and I cannot lay on my own bed *owing to the planets being so bad concerning your wife,* and I must have one of your buying or it will not do.—You must bring down the china, the sugar, the caddy, the three silver spoons, and the tea at the same time when you buy the bed, and pack them up altogether.—My brother's boat will be up in a day or two, and I will order my brother's boatman to call for them all at Mary Bateman's, and

you must give Mary Bateman one shilling for the boatman, and I will place it to your account. Your wife must burn this as soon as it is read or it will not do."

This had the desired effect; and the prisoner having called upon the Perigos, she accompanied them to the shops of a Mr Dobbin, and a Mr Musgrave, at Leeds, to purchase the various articles named, which were eventually bought at a cost of sixteen pounds, and sent to Mr Sutton's, at the Lion and Lamb Inn, Kirkgate, there to await the arrival of the supposed messenger.

At the end of April, the following letter arrived:—  
"My dear Friends.—I am sorry to tell you you will take an illness in the month of May next, one or both of you, but I think both, but the works of God must have its course.—You will escape the chambers of the grave; though you seem to be dead, yet you will live. Your wife must take half-a-pound of honey down from Bramley to Mary Bateman's at Leeds, and it must remain there till you go down yourself, and she will put in such-like stuff as I have sent from Scarbro' to her, and she will put it in when you come down, and see her yourself, or it will not do. You must eat pudding for six days, and you must put in such-like stuff as I have sent to Mary Bateman from Scarbro', and she will give your wife it, but you must not begin to eat of this pudding while I let you know. If ever you find yourself sickly at any time, you must take each of you a teaspoonful of this honey; I will remit twenty pounds to you on the 20th day of May, and it will pay a little of what you owe. You must bring this down to Mary Bateman's, and burn it at her house, when you come down next time."

The instructions contained in this letter were complied with, and the prisoner having first mixed a white powder in the honey, handed over six



others of the same colour and description to Mrs Perigo, saying that they must be used in the precise manner mentioned upon them, or they would all be killed. On the 5th of May, another letter arrived in the following terms:—

“ My dear Friends.—You must begin to eat pudding on the 11th of May, and you must put one of the powders in every day as they are marked, for six days—and you must see it put in yourself every day or else it will not do. If you find yourself sickly at any time you must not have no doctor, for it will not do, and you must not let the boy that used to eat with you eat of that pudding for six days; and you must make only just as much as you can eat yourselves, if there is any left it will not do. You must keep the door fast as much as possible or you will be overcome by some enemy. Now think on and take my directions or else it will kill us all. About the 25th of May I will come to Leeds and send for your wife to Mary Bateman’s; your wife will take me by the hand and say, ‘ God bless you that I ever found you out.’ It has pleased God to send me into the world that I might destroy the works of darkness; I call them the works of darkness because they are dark to you—now mind what I say whatever you do. This letter must be burned in straw on the hearth by your wife.”

The absurd credulity of Mr and Mrs Perigo even yet favoured the horrid designs of the prisoner; and, in obedience to the directions which they received, they began to eat the puddings on the day named. For five days, they had no particular flavour, but upon the sixth powder being mixed, the pudding was found so nauseous, that the former could only eat one or two mouthfuls, while his wife managed to swallow three or four. They were both directly seized with violent vomiting, and Mrs Perigo, whose faith appears to have been greater

than that of her husband, at once had recourse to the honey. Their sickness continued during the whole day, but although Mrs Perigo suffered the most intense torments, she positively refused to hear of a doctor's being sent for, lest, as she said, the charm should be broken, by Miss Blythe's directions being opposed. The recovery of the husband from the illness, by which he was affected, slowly progressed ; but the wife, who persisted in eating the honey, continued daily to lose strength, and at length expired on the 24th of May, her last words being a request to her husband not to be "rash" with Mary Bateman, but to await the coming of the appointed time.

Mr Chorley, a surgeon, was subsequently called in to see her body ; but although he expressed his firm belief that the death of the deceased was caused by her having taken poison, and although that impression was confirmed by the circumstance of a cat dying immediately after it had eaten some of the pudding, no further steps were taken to ascertain the real cause of death, and Perigo even subsequently continued in communication with the prisoner.

Upon his informing her of the death of his wife, she at once declared that it was attributable to her having eaten all the honey at once, and then in the beginning of June, he received the following letter from Miss Blythe :—

" My dear Friend.—I am sorry to tell you that your wife should touch of those things which I ordered her not, and for that reason it has caused her death ; it had likened to have killed me at Scarborough, and Mary Bateman at Leeds, and you and all, and for this reason, she will rise from the grave, she will stroke your face with her right hand, and you will lose the use of one side, but I will pray for you.—I would not have you go to no doctor, for

it will not do. I would have you to eat and drink what you like, and you will be better. Now, my dear friend, take my directions, do and it will be better for you.—Pray God bless you. Amen. Amen. You must burn this letter immediately after it is read.”

Letters were also subsequently received by him, purporting to be from the same person, in which new demands for clothing, coals, and other articles were made, but at length, in the month of October, 1808, two years having elapsed since the commencement of the charm, he thought that the time had fully arrived, when, if any good effects were to be produced from it, they would have been apparent, and that therefore he was entitled to look for his money in the bed. He, in consequence, commenced a search for the little silk bags, in which his notes and money had been, as he supposed, sewn up ; but although the bags indeed were in precisely the same positions in which they had been placed by his deceased wife, by some unaccountable conjuration, the notes and gold had turned to rotten cabbage-leaves and bad farthings. The darkness, by which the truth had been so long obscured, now passed away and having communicated with the prisoner, by a stratagem, meeting her under pretence of receiving from her a bottle of medicine, which was to cure him from the effects of the puddings which still remained, he caused her to be apprehended. Upon her house being searched, nearly all the property sent to the supposed Miss Blythe was found in her possession, and a bottle containing a liquid mixed with two powders, one of which was proved to be oatmeal, and the other arsenic, was taken from her pocket when she was taken into custody.

The rest of the evidence against the prisoner went to show that there was no such person as Miss Blythe living at Scarborough, and that all the



letters which had been received by Perigo were in her own handwriting, and had been sent by her to Scarborough to be transmitted back again. An attempt was also proved to have been made by her to purchase some arsenic, at the shop of a Mr Clough, in Kirkgate, in the month of April, 1807, but the most important testimony was that of Mr Chorley, the surgeon, who distinctly proved that he had analysed what remained of the pudding, and of the contents of the honey pot, and that he had found them both to contain a deadly poison, called corrosive sublimate of mercury, and that the symptoms exhibited by deceased and her husband were such as would have arisen from the administration of such a drug.

The prisoner's defence consisted of a simple denial of the charge, and the learned judge then proceeded to address the jury. Having stated the nature of the allegations made in the indictment, he said that in order to come to a conclusion as to the guilt of the prisoner, it was necessary that three points should be clearly made out. 1st. That the deceased died of poison. 2nd. That the poison was administered by the contrivance and knowledge of the prisoner. And 3rd. That it was so done for the purpose of occasioning the death of the deceased. A large body of evidence had been laid before them, to prove that the prisoner had engaged in schemes of fraud against the deceased and her husband, which was proved not merely by the evidence of Wm Perigo, but by the testimony of other witnesses; and the inference the prosecutors drew from this fraud was the existence of a powerful motive or temptation to commit a still greater crime, for the purpose of escaping the shame and punishment which must have attended the detection of the fraud; a fraud so gross, that it excited his surprise that any individual in that age and nation could be the dupe of

it. But the jury should not go beyond this inference, and presume that, because the prisoner had been guilty of fraud, she was of course likely to have committed the crime of murder ; that, if proved, must be shown by other evidence. His Lordship then proceeded to recapitulate the whole of the evidence, as detailed in the preceding pages, and concluded with the following observations: " It is impossible not to be struck with wonder at the extraordinary credulity of Wm Perigo, which neither the loss of his property, the death of his wife, and his own severe sufferings, could dispel ; and it was not until the month of October in the following year, that he ventured to open his hid treasure, and found there what every one in court must have anticipated that he would find, not a single vestige of his property ; and his evidence is laid before the jury with the observation which arises from this uncommon want of judgment. His memory however appears to be very retentive, and his evidence is confirmed, and that in different parts of the narrative, by other witnesses ; and many parts of the case do not rest upon his evidence at all. The illness, and peculiar symptoms, which preceded the death of his wife ; his own severe sickness ; and a variety of other circumstances attending the experiments made upon the pudding, were proved by separate and independent testimony ; and it is most strange, that, in a case of so much suspicion as it appeared to have excited at the time, the interment of the body should have taken place without any inquiry as to the cause of death, an inquiry which then would have been much less difficult ; though the fact of the deceased having died of poison is now well established. The main question is, Did the prisoner contrive the means to induce the deceased to take it ?—if she did so contrive the means, the intent could only be to destroy.—Poison so deadly could

not be administered with any other view. The jury will lay all the facts and circumstances together ; and if they feel them press so strongly against the prisoner, as to induce a conviction of the prisoner's having procured the deceased to take poison, with an intent to occasion her death, they will find her guilty ; if they do not think the evidence conclusive, they will, in that case, find the prisoner not guilty."

The jury, after conferring for a moment, found the prisoner guilty, and the judge proceeded to pass sentence of death upon her, in nearly the following words :—

" Mary Bateman, you have been convicted of wilful murder by a jury, who, after having examined your case with caution, have, constrained by the force of evidence, pronounced you guilty ; and it only remains for me to fulfil my painful duty by passing upon you the awful sentence of the law. After you have been so long in the situation in which you now stand, and harassed as your mind must be by the long detail of your crimes, and by listening to the sufferings you have occasioned, I do not wish to add to your distress by saying more than my duty renders necessary. Of your guilt, there cannot remain a particle of doubt in the breast of any one who has heard your case.—You entered into a long and premeditated system of fraud, which you carried on for a length of time, which is most astonishing, and by means which one would have supposed could not, in this age and nation, have been practised with success. To prevent a discovery of your complicated fraud, and the punishment which must have resulted therefrom, you deliberately contrived the death of the persons you had so grossly injured, and that by means of poison, a mode of destruction against which there is no sure protection ; but your guilty design was not fully accomplished, and, after so extraordinary



a lapse of time, you are reserved as a signal example of the justice of that mysterious Providence, which, sooner or later, overtakes guilt like yours ; and at the very time when you were apprehended, there is the greatest reason to suppose, that if your surviving victim had met you alone, as you wished him to do, you would have administered to him a more deadly dose, which would have completed the diabolical project you had long before formed, but which at that time had only partially succeeded ; for upon your person, at that moment, was found a phial containing a most deadly poison. For crimes like yours, in this world, the gates of mercy are closed. You afforded your victim no time for preparation ; but the law, while it dooms you to death, has, in its mercy, afforded you time for repentance, and the assistance of pious and devout men, whose admonitions, and prayers, and counsels, may assist to prepare you for another world, where even your crimes, if sincerely repented of, may find mercy.

“ The sentence of the law is, and the court doth award it, That you be taken to the place from whence you came, and from thence, on Monday next, to the place of execution, there to be hanged by the neck until you are dead ; and that your body be given to the surgeons to be dissected and anatomised ; and may Almighty God have mercy upon your soul.”

The prisoner having intimated that she was pregnant, the clerk of the arraigns said, “ Mary Bateman, what have you to say, why immediate execution should not be awarded against you ? ” On which the prisoner pleaded that she was twenty-two weeks gone with child. On this plea the judge ordered the sheriff to impanel a jury of matrons ; this order created a general consternation among the ladies, who hastened to quit the court, to pre-

vent the execution of so painful an office being imposed upon them. His Lordship, in consequence, ordered the doors to be closed, and in about half-an-hour, twelve married women being impanelled, they were sworn in court, and charged to inquire "whether the prisoner was with quick child?" The jury of matrons then retired with the prisoner, and on their return into court delivered their verdict, which was, that Mary Bateman is not with quick child. The execution of course was not respite, and she was remanded back to prison.

During the brief interval between her receiving sentence of death and her execution, the ordinary, the Rev George Brown, took great pains to prevail upon her ingenuously to acknowledge and confess her crimes. Though the prisoner behaved with decorum, during the few hours that remained of her existence, and readily joined in the customary offices of devotion, no traits of that deep compunction of mind, which, for crimes like hers, must be felt where repentance is sincere, could be observed; but she maintained her caution and mystery to the last. On the day preceding her execution, she wrote a letter to her husband, in which she enclosed her wedding-ring, with a request that it might be given to her daughter. She admitted that she had been guilty of many frauds, but still denied that she had had any intention to produce the death of Mr or Mrs Perigo.

Upon the Monday morning at five o'clock she was called from her cell, to undergo the last sentence of the law. She received the Communion with some other prisoners, who were about to be executed on the same day, but all attempts to induce her to acknowledge the justice of her sentence, or the crime of which she had been found guilty, proved vain. She maintained the greatest firmness in her demeanour to the last, which was in no wise inter-

rupted even upon her taking leave of her infant child, which lay sleeping in her cell, at the moment of her being called out to the scaffold.

Upon the appearance of the convict upon the platform, the deepest silence prevailed amongst the immense assemblage of persons, which had collected to witness the execution. As a final duty, the Rev Mr Brown, immediately before the drop fell, again exhorted the unhappy woman to confession, but her only reply was a repetition of the declaration of her innocence, and the next moment terminated her existence.

Her body having remained suspended during the usual time, was cut down, and sent to the General Infirmary at Leeds to be anatomised. Immense crowds of persons assembled to meet the hearse, in which it was carried ; and so great was the desire of the people to see her remains, that 30*l* were collected for the use of the infirmary, by the payment of 3*d* for each person admitted to the apartment in which they were exposed.

A short sketch of the life of this remarkable woman, and a few anecdotes of her proceedings, shall conclude this article. Mary Bateman, it appears, was born of reputable parents at Aisenby, near Thirsk, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, in the year 1768 : her father, whose name was Harker, carrying on business as a small farmer. As early as at the age of five years, she exhibited much of that sly knavery, which subsequently so extraordinarily distinguished her character ; and many were the frauds and falsehoods, of which she was guilty, and for which she was punished. In the year 1780, she first quitted her father's house, to undertake the duties of a servant in Thirsk, but having been guilty of some peccadilloes, she proceeded to York in 1787 ; but before she had been in that city more than twelve months, she was detected in pilfering some



trifling articles of property belonging to her mistress, and was compelled to run off to Leeds, without waiting either for her wages or her clothes. For a considerable time she remained without employment or friends, but at length upon the recommendation of an acquaintance of her father, she obtained an engagement in the shop of a mantua-maker, in whose service she remained for more than three years. She then became acquainted with John Bateman, to whom after a three weeks' courtship she was married in the year 1792.

Within two months after her marriage, she was found to have been guilty of many frauds, and she only escaped prosecution by inducing her husband to move frequently from place to place, so as to escape apprehension ; and at length poor Bateman, driven almost wild by the tricks of his wife, entered the supplementary militia. Mrs Bateman was now entirely thrown upon her own resources, and unable to follow any reputable trade, she in the year 1799 took up her residence in Marsh Lane, near Timble Bridge, Leeds, and proceeded to deal in fortune-telling and the sale of charms. From a long course of iniquity, carried on chiefly through the medium of the most wily arts, she had acquired a manner, and a mode of speech peculiarly adapted to her new profession ; and abundance of credulous victims, upon whom she was able to prosecute her schemes, daily presented themselves to her.

Her first daring attempt was upon a Mrs Greenwood, whom she persuaded that her husband was in a situation of the greatest peril, which would be aggravated by the circumstance being mentioned to him ; that he was in danger of being accused of a crime, for which he would be instantly sacrificed, and that so relentless were his prosecutors, that unless four pieces of gold, four pieces of leather, four pieces of blotting-paper, and four brass screws

were given to her, to "screw them down," he would be dead before the morning. Mrs Greenwood, unfortunately for the trick, was not possessed of even one piece of gold, and the proposition of the "witch," that she should steal what she wanted, so startled her, that she had fortitude enough to emancipate herself from the trammels which had been thrown round her.

Her next attempt was upon a poor woman named Stead, upon whose jealous fears she worked so far as to obtain from her nearly the whole of her furniture, under pretence of "screwing down," a woman, with whom she represented that her husband was intimate. Stead was about to enter the army; and Mrs Bateman next easily found means to persuade him, as she had persuaded his wife, of her powers, and she obtained from him all the little money, which he had obtained as his bounty, under the pretence of "screwing down" his officers to give him promotion. The fascinating and all powerful Miss Blythe had not yet been discovered, but all her operations were now performed through the medium of a Mrs Moore, whose existence, it may readily be supposed, was as doubtful as that of her subsequent coadjutor.

Terror was the great engine by which this woman carried on her frauds, and as the wife of Stead had still a few articles of furniture and clothing—the last sad wreck of their property, she persuaded her if something was not done to prevent it, her daughter, who was then only about eight years of age, would, when she attained the age of fourteen, become pregnant of an illegitimate child, and that either she would murder herself, or would be murdered by her seducer, to prevent which, 17s was to be placed in Mary Bateman's hands. This money she was to hand over to the invisible Mrs Moore, who was to reduce the coin to a "silver charm,"

which charm was to be worn round the girl's arm till the period of danger was past, but which, when the bubble burst three months after, was cut from the child's arm, when by a strange transmutation of metal, the silver had turned to pewter.

In the midst of these scenes of fraud in one party, and weakness in the other, a relation of Stead's came over to Leeds in a state of pregnancy, and forsaken by her lover. This young woman was a fine subject for the artful Mary Bateman, who soon learned her misfortune, and undertook, on condition that a guinea was given to her, for Mrs Moore, to make the lover marry her. The money was paid, but no lover appeared. It was then found out that he was too strong for the first charm, and that more money and more screws would be necessary to screw him down to the altar of Hymen. Still he came not; and the girl finding the money she had fast diminishing, procured a service in a respectable family in Leeds, the master of which being a bachelor, Mary so contrived to persuade the silly girl that she could by her arts oblige him to marry her. Here a difficulty arose—the unborn child was in the way; but Mary, ever ready to undertake any business, however desperate, engaged to remove the impediment, and for that purpose administered certain medicines to the ill-fated young woman, which produced the desired effect, and abortion ensued. The master after all was not to be caught; but the girl's former sweetheart coming over to Leeds married her, though she was, at that time, owing as is supposed to the medicine given to her by Mary Bateman, in a very emaciated state. In speaking of her connection with this vile woman, she used the following remarkable expression:—“Had I never known Mary Bateman, my child would now have been in my arms, and I should have been a healthy woman—but it is in eternity, and I



am going after it as fast as time and a ruined constitution can carry me." The unhappy girl died soon after, a melancholy instance of the direful effects which too great credulity and weakness of mind may produce.

The artifices and frauds of which she had been hitherto guilty, however, shrink into comparative obscurity, when compared with the offences which Mrs Bateman subsequently committed. The case of the unhappy Mrs Perigo has been already mentioned, and its circumstances detailed, but there is too much reason to believe that she was concerned in producing the death of three persons, a crime of still greater and more cold-blooded cruelty. The Misses Kitchen were Quaker ladies, who carried on the business of linen-drapers, near St Peter's Square, Leeds, and Mrs Bateman, by representations of her skill in divination, and reading the stars, managed so far to ingratiate herself into their good graces as to become their confidant and most intimate adviser. She attended their shop, was a constant visitor at their house, and her interference extended even to the domestic concerns of the family. In the month of September, 1803, the younger Miss Kitchen was attacked with a severe and painful illness, and Bateman possessing the full confidence of the family procured medicines from a person whom she described as a country doctor, but instead of their producing any improvement in the condition of the unhappy patient, in less than a week she died. Her mother arrived from Wakefield, where she lived, in time only to receive the last breath of her daughter, but in two days, she, as well as the surviving sister, died, and they were all three placed in the same grave. Throughout the whole of these distressing illnesses Mary Bateman was the sole attendant upon the unhappy women, and after their death she took upon herself the task of

rendering them those last melancholy offices, which are usually the duty of the near relations of the deceased. No person was permitted by her to enter the house, under pretence that the deceased persons had been affected by the plague, except those, whose presence was rendered necessary in order to the performance of the rites of sepulture ; and for many weeks the neighbourhood was shunned, lest the supposed infection might spread. Mrs Bateman, however, in the midst of all, exhibited the most praiseworthy and disinterested affection for the poor ladies, and in the face of all danger, hesitated not to minister to their wants, and even after death to take those precautions, in fumigating the house, which were supposed to be necessary. She prepared their meals, and by her hands alone were the medicines administered, which she professed to have been prescribed. Several months had elapsed before any inquiries were made as to the condition in which the deceased persons had died, and then some of their creditors having determined to ascertain what property they had left behind them, entered the house. To their surprise they discovered that of the furniture and stock, of which the deceased had been known to be possessed, scarce a vestige remained ; and the discovery of some articles of property in the house of Bateman, which were known to have belonged to the deceased ladies, but which the former declared had been given to her by them, afforded grounds for a well-founded suspicion that poison was the " plague " of which they had died, although under the circumstances of the case, and after the lapse of so long a time, evidence could not be obtained which could be deemed conclusive upon the subject. The determined cruelty exercised in the case of the Perigos appeared to sanction the suspicions which were entertained, and after conviction Mrs Bateman

was minutely questioned upon the subject, but all efforts to induce a confession of this crime, or of that of which she was found guilty, proved unavailing.

It would be useless to follow this wretched woman through the subsequent scenes of her miserable life. Fraud and deceit were the only means by which she was able to carry on the war, and numerous were the impudent and heartless schemes which she put into operation to dupe the unhappy objects of her attacks. Her character was such as to prevent her long pursuing her occupation in one position, and she was repeatedly compelled to change her abode until she at length took up her residence in Black Dog Lane, where she was apprehended. Her husband at this time had returned from the militia several years, and although he followed the trade to which he had been brought up, there can be little doubt that he shared the proceeds of his wife's villainies.

Mary Bateman was neat in her person and dress, and though there was nothing ingenuous in her countenance, it had an air of placidity and composure, not ill adapted to make a favourable impression on those who visited her. Her manner of address was soft and insinuating, with the affectation of sanctity. In her domestic arrangements she was regular, and was mistress of such qualifications in housewifery as, with an honest heart, would have enabled her to fill her station with respectability and usefulness.

A few anecdotes upon the subject of the belief in witchcraft, in former days, we trust will not prove uninteresting to our readers.

The reign of James the Sixth of Scotland, and First of England, may be said to have been the witchcraft age of Great Britain. Scotland had always been a sort of fairy land; but it remained for that sagacious prince, at a time when knowledge



was beginning to dispel the mists of superstition, to contribute, by his authority and writings, to resolve a prejudice of education into an article of religious belief amongst the Scottish people. He wrote and published a "Treatise on Dæmonologie;" the purpose of which was, to "resolve the doubting hearts of many, as to the fearful abounding of those detestable slaves of the Devil, witches, or enchanters." The authority of Scripture was perverted, to show, not only the possibility, but certainty, that such "detestable scenes" do exist; and many most ridiculous stories of evil enchantment were added, to establish their "fearful abounding." The treatise, which is in the form of a dialogue, treats also of the punishment which such crimes deserve; concluding, that "no sex, age, nor rank, should be excused from the punishment of death, according to the law of God, the civil and imperial law, and the municipal law of all Christian nations." In answer to the question, "What to judge of death, I pray you?" The answer is, "It is commonlie used by fyre, but there is an indifferent thing to be used in every country, according to the law or custume thereof."

Such, in fact, was the cruel and barbarous law of James's native country; and such became the law also of England, when he succeeded to the sceptre of Elizabeth. Many hundreds of unfortunate creatures, in both countries, became its victims, suffering death ignominiously, for an impossible offence: neither sex, nor age, nor rank, as James had sternly enjoined, was spared; and it was the most hapless and inoffensive, such as aged and lone women, who were most exposed to its malignant operation.

There were persons regularly employed in hunting out, and bringing to punishment, those unfortunate beings suspected of witchcraft.

Matthew Hopkins resided at Manningtree, in Essex, and was witchfinder for the associated counties of Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, and Huntingdonshire. In the years 1644, 1645, and 1646, accompanied by one John Stern, he brought many to the fatal tree as reputed witches. He hanged, in one year, no less than sixty reputed witches of his own county of Essex. The old, the ignorant, and the indigent, such as could neither plead their own cause nor hire an advocate, were the miserable victims of this wretch's credulity, spleen, and avarice. He pretended to be a great critic in *special marks*, which were only moles, scorbutic spots, or warts, that frequently grow large and pendulous in old age; but were absurdly supposed to be teats to suckle imps. His ultimate method of proof was by tying together the thumbs and toes of the suspected person, about whose waist was fastened a cord, the ends of which were held on the banks of the river by two men, in whose power it was to strain or slacken it. Swimming, upon this experiment, was deemed a sufficient proof of guilt; for which King James (who is said to have recommended, if he did not invent it) assigned a ridiculous reason, that, "as some persons had renounced their baptism by water, so the water refuses to receive them." Sometimes those who were accused of diabolical practices were tied neck and heels, and tossed into a pond: if they floated or swam, they were consequently guilty, and were therefore taken out and burned; but if they were innocent, they were *only* drowned. The experiment of swimming was at length tried upon Hopkins himself, in his own way, and he was upon the event condemned, and, as it seems, executed as a wizard. In a letter from Serjeant Widrinton to Lord Whitelocke, mention is made of another fellow of the same profession as Hopkins. This fellow received twenty shillings

a-head for every witch he discovered, and thereby obtained rewards amounting to thirty pounds.

In an old print of this execrable character, he is represented with two witches. One of them, named Holt, is supposed to say, "My Impes are, 1. Ile-mauzyr; 2. Pyewackett; 3. Pecke in the Crown; 4. Griezell Griediegutt." Four animals attend: Jarmara, a black dog; Sacke and Sugar, a hare; Newes, a ferret; Vinegar Tom, a bull-headed greyhound. This print is in the Pepysian library.

Amongst a number of women (as many as sixteen) whom Hopkins, in the year 1644, accused at Yarmouth, was one, of whom the following account is given. It appears that she used to work for Mr Moulton (a stocking merchant, and alderman of the town), and upon a certain day went to his house for work; but he being from home, his man refused to let her have any till his master returned; whereupon, being exasperated against the man, she applied herself to the maid, and desired some knitting-work of her; and when she returned the like answer, she went home in great discontent against them both. That night, when she was in bed, she heard a knock at her door, and going to her window, she saw (it being moon-light) a tall black man there: and asked what he would have? He told her that she was discontented, because she could not get work; and that he would put her into a way that she should never want anything. On this, she let him in, and asked him what he had to say to her? He told her he must first see her hands; and taking out something like a penknife, he gave it a little scratch, so that a little blood followed, a scar being still visible when she told the story; then he took some of the blood in a pen, and pulling a book out of his pocket, bid her write her name; and when she said she could not, he said he would guide her hand. When this was done, he bid her now ask



what she would have. And when she desired first to be revenged on the man, he promised to give her an account of it next night, and so leaving her some money went away. The next night he came to her again, and told her he could do nothing against the man, for he went constantly to church, and said his prayers morning and evening. Then she desired him to revenge her on the maid: but he said the same of the maid, and that therefore he could not hurt her. But she said that there was a young child in the house, which was more easy to be dealt with. Whereupon she desired him to do what he could against it. The next night he came again, and brought with him an image of wax, and told her they must go and bury that in the church-yard, and then the child, which he had put in great pain already, should waste away as that image wasted. Whereupon they went together and buried it. The child having lain in a languishing condition for about eighteen months, and being very near death, the minister sent this woman with this account to the magistrates, who thereupon sent her to Mr Moulton's, where, in the same room that the child lay, almost dead, she was examined concerning the particulars aforesaid; all which she confessed, and had no sooner done, but the child, who was three years old, and was thought to be dead or dying, laughed, and began to stir and raise up itself: and from that instant began to recover. The woman was convicted upon her own confession, and was executed accordingly.

A more melancholy tale does not occur in the annals of necromancy, than that of the Lancashire Witches, in 1612. The scene of the story is in Penderbury Forest, four or five miles from Manchester, remarkable for its picturesque and gloomy situation. It had long been of ill repute, as a consecrated haunt of diabolical intercourse, when a country

magistrate, Roger Nowel by name, took it into his head that he should perform a great public service by routing out a nest of witches, who had rendered the place a terror to all the neighbouring vulgar. The first persons he seized on were Elizabeth Demdike and Ann Chattox. The former was eighty years of age, and had for some years been blind, and principally subsisted by begging, though she had a miserable hovel on the spot, which she called her own. Ann Chattox was of the same age, and had for some time been threatened with the calamity of blindness. Demdike was held to be so hardened a witch that she had trained all her family to the mystery: namely, Elizabeth Device, her daughter, and James and Alison Device, her great-grandchildren. These, together with John Balcock, and Jane his mother, Alice Natter, Catherine Hewitt, and Isabel Roby, were successively apprehended by the diligence of Nowel, and one or two neighbouring magistrates, and were all of them by some means induced, some to make a more liberal, and others a more restricted confession of their misdeeds in witchcraft, and were afterwards hurried away to Lancaster Castle, fifty miles off, to prison. Their crimes were said to have universally proceeded from malignity and resentment; and it was reported to have repeatedly happened for poor old Demdike to be led by night from her habitation into the open air, by some member of her family, where she was left alone for an hour to curse her victim, and pursue her unholy incantations, and was then sought and brought back again to her hovel, her curses never failing to produce the desired effect.

The poor wretches had been but a short time in prison, when information was given that a meeting of witches was held on Good-Friday, at Malkin's Tower, the habitation of Elizabeth Device, to the number of twenty persons, to consult how, by

infernal machinations, to kill one Lovel, an officer, to blow up Lancaster Castle, deliver the prisoners, and to kill another man, of the name of Lister. The last object was effected; the other plans, by some means, which are not related, were prevented.

The prisoners were kept in jail till the summer assizes; but in the mean time, the poor blind Demdike died in confinement.

The other prisoners were severally indicted for killing by witchcraft certain persons who were named, and were all found guilty. The principal witnesses against Elizabeth Device were James Device and Jennet Device, her grandchildren, the latter only nine years of age. When this girl was put into the witness-box, the grandmother, on seeing her, set up so dreadful a yell, intermixed with dreadful curses, that the child declared that she could not go on with her evidence, unless the prisoner was removed. This was agreed to, and both brother and sister swore that they had been present, when the Devil came to their grandmother, in the shape of a black dog, and asked her what she desired. She said the death of John Robinson; when the dog told her to make an image of Robinson in clay, and after crumble it into dust, and as fast as the image perished, the life of the victim should waste away, and in conclusion the man should die. This testimony was received; and upon the conviction, which followed, ten persons were led to the gallows, on the twentieth of August, Ann Chattox, of eighty years of age, among the rest, the day after the trials, which lasted two days, were finished.

The judges who presided on these trials were Sir James Altham and Sir Edward Bromley, barons of the exchequer.

Guluim, who gives the most simple and interesting account of this melancholy case, conjectures,



with much reason, that the old women had played at the game of commerce with the Devil, in order to make their simpler neighbours afraid of them ; and that they played the game so long, that in an imperfect degree they deceived themselves. But when one of them actually saw her grandchild of nine years old placed in the witness-box, with the intention of consigning her to a public and ignominious death, then the reveries of the imagination vanished, and she deeply felt the reality, that, when she had been somewhat imposing on the child, in devilish sport, she had been whetting the dagger that was to take her own life. It was then no wonder that she uttered a supernatural yell, and poured curses from her heart.

Such was the first case of the Lancashire Witches. In that which follows, the accusation was clearly traced to be founded on a most villianous conspiracy.

About the year 1634, a boy named Edmund Robinson, whose father, a very poor man, dwelt in Pendle Forest, the scene of the alleged witching, declared that, while gathering wild-flowers in one of the glades of the forest, he saw two greyhounds, which he supposed to belong to a gentleman in the neighbourhood. Seeing nobody following them, the boy alleged that he proposed to have a course ; but though a hare was started, the dogs refused to run. Young Robinson was about to punish them with a switch, when one Dame Dickenson, a neighbour's wife, started up instead of the one greyhound ; and a little boy instead of the other. The witness averred that Mother Dickenson offered him money to conceal what he had seen, which he refused, saying, ' Nay ; thou art a witch ! ' Apparently, she was determined he should have full evidence of the truth of what he said, for she pulled out of her pocket a bridle, and shot it over the head

of the boy, who had so lately represented the other greyhound. He was then directly changed into a horse; Mother Dickenson mounted, and took Robinson before her. They made to a large house or barn, called Hourstown, into which the boy entered with the others. He there saw six or seven persons pulling at halters, from which, as they pulled them, meat ready-dressed came flying in quantities, together with lumps of butter, porringers of milk, and whatever else might, in his fancy, complete a rustic feast. He declared that, while engaged in the charm, they made such ugly faces and looked so fiendish, that he was frightened.

This story succeeded so well, that the father of the boy took him round to the neighbouring churches, where he placed him standing on a bench after service, and bade him look round and see what he could observe. The device, however clumsy, succeeded; and no less than seventeen persons were apprehended at the boy's election, and conducted, as witches, to Lancaster Castle. These seventeen persons were tried at the assizes and found guilty; but the judge, whose name has unfortunately been lost, unlike Sir James Altham and Sir Edward Bromley, saw something in the case that excited his suspicion, and, though the juries had not hesitated in any one instance, respited the convicts, and sent up a report of the affair to the Government. Twenty-two years had not elapsed since the former case, in vain. Four of the prisoners were, by the judge's recommendation, sent for to the metropolis, and were examined, first by the king's physician, and then by Charles the First, in person. The boy's story was strictly scrutinised, and in the end, he confessed that it was all an imposture, in which he had been instructed by his father; and the whole seventeen prisoners received the royal pardon.

So late as the year 1679, several unfortunate persons were tried and executed at Borrostowness in Scotland, for witchcraft, four of them being poor widows. The following is a literal copy of the indictment upon which they were arraigned:—

“Annaple Thompsone, widow in Borrostowness, Margaret Pringle, relict of the deceast John Campbell, seivewright there, &c. &c.

“Aye, and ilk ane of you, are indigtted and accused, that, whereas, notwithstanding the law of God particularlie sett down in the 20th chapter of Leveticus and the 18th chapter of Deuteronomy, and be the lawes and actes of parliament of this kingdome and constant practis thereof, particularlie to the 27 act, 29 parliament Q. Marie, the cryme of witchcraft is declaired to be one horreid, abominable, and capitall cryme, punishable with the pains of death and confiscatiown of moveables:—nevertheless it is of veritie, that you have comitted and are gwyltie of the said crime of witchcraft, in awa far ye have entered in practicion with the devile, the enemie of your salvatiown, and have renounced our blessed Lord and Savior, and your baptizme, and have given yourselfes, both soulles and bodies, to the devile, and swyndrie wyth witches, in divers places. And particularlie ye, the said Annaple Thompsone, had a metting with the devile the time of your weidowhood, before you were married to your last husband, in your coming betwixt Linlithgow and Borrostowness, where the devile, in the lykeness of one black man, told you, that you was one poor puddled bodie, and had one lyiff and difficulties to win throu the world; and promesed iff ye wald followe him, and go alongst with him, you should never want, but have one better lyiff; and about fyve wekes thereafter the devile appeared to you, when you was going to the coal-hill, abowt sevin a-clock in the morning. Having



renewed his former temptatiown, you did con-  
 deshend thereto and declared yourself content to  
 follow him and become his servant ; whereupon the  
 devile \* \* \* and ye and each persone of  
 you wis at several metting with the devile, in the  
 linkes of Borrostowness, and in the house of you,  
 Bessie Vicker ; and ye did eate and drink with the  
 devile, and with one another, and with witches in  
 her howss in the night tyme ; and the said Wm  
 Crow bought the ale, which ye drank, extending  
 about sevin gallons, from the howss of Elizabeth  
 Hamilton ; and you, the said Annaple, had another  
 metting about fyve wekes ago, when you wis goeing  
 to the coal-hill of Grange, and he inveitted you to  
 go alongst and drink with him in the Grange  
 farmes ; and you, the said Margaret Pringle, have  
 bein one witch this many yeeres by gone, hath  
 renounced your baptizme and becum the devile's  
 servant, and promis to follow him ; and the devile  
 took you by the right hand, whereby it was for  
 eight days greivowslie pained, but, having it  
 twitched new again, it immedeatelie became haille ;  
 and you, the said Margaret Hamilton has bein the  
 devile's servant these eight or nine years by gone,  
 and he appeared and conversed with you at the  
 town well of Borrostowness, and several times at  
 your owin howss, and drank several choppens of ale  
 with you. \* \* and the devile gane you ane  
 fyne merk piece of gold, which a lyttle after becam  
 ane skleite stone ; and you, the said Margaret  
 Hamilton, relict of James Pullevart, has been ane  
 witch, and the devile's servant, thertie yeres since,  
 hath renounced your baptizme, as said is

\* \* \* \* \*

And ye, and ilk of you, was at a meeting with the  
 devile and other witches, at the croce of Murestain,  
 above Renneil, upon the threttein of October last,  
 where you all danced, and the devile acted the piper,

and where you endeavoured to have destroyed Androw Mitchell, sone to John Mitchell, elder in dean of Kenneil."

The charges thus made against the "poor puddled bodies," Annaple Thompstone and her associates, however ludicrous they may seem, were substantiated to the satisfaction of a jury; and for so meeting, and dancing, and drinking, and frolicking with his santanic majesty (who condescended to act the piper), the unfortunate defendants were solemnly condemned, "to be taken to the west end of Borrostowness, the ordinary place of execution there, upon Tuesday, the 23rd day of December current, betwixt two and four in the afternoon, and then to be wirried at a steack [that is, like a bull or a badger, by dogs in human shape] till they be dead, and thereafter to have their bodies burned to ashes."

The strange and eventful history of the Witches of New England is, perhaps, generally known to the educated and informed; still there must be many who are not aware of all its melancholy details. As a story of witchcraft, without any poetry in it, without anything to amuse the imagination, or interest the fancy, it, perhaps, surpasses everything upon record. The prosecutions for witchcraft in New England were numerous, and they continued, with little intermission, principally at Salem, during the greater part of the year 1692. The accusations were of the most vulgar and contemptible sort—invisible pinchings and blows, fits, with the blastings and mortality of cattle, and wains stuck fast in the ground, or losing their wheels. A conspicuous feature in nearly the whole of these stories, was what they named "the spectral sight," or, in other words, that the profligate accusers first feigned, for the most part, the injuries they received, and next saw the figures and action of the persons who inflicted them, when they were invisible to every

one else. Hence the miserable prosecutors gained the power of gratifying the wantonness of their malice, by pretending that they suffered by the hand of any one against whom they had an ill will. The persons so charged, though unseen by any one but the accuser, and who in their corporal presence were at a distance of miles, and were doubtless wholly unconscious of the mischief that was hatching against them, were immediately taken up, and cast into prison. And what was more monstrous and incredible, there stood the prisoner on trial for his life, while the witnesses were permitted to swear that his spectre had haunted them, and afflicted them with all manner of injuries !

The first specimen of this sort of accusation was given by one Paris, a minister of a church at Salem, in the end of the year 1691, who had two daughters, one nine years old, the other eleven who were afflicted with fits and convulsions. The first person fixed on as the mysterious author of these evils, was Tituba, a female slave in the family, and she was harassed by her master into a confession of unlawful practices and spells. The girls then fixed on Sarah Good, a female, known to be the victim of a morbid melancholy, and Osborne, a poor man who had for a considerable time been bed-ridden, as persons whose spectres had perpetually haunted and tormented them, and Good was, twelve months afterwards, hanged on this accusation.

A person, who was one of the first to fall under the imputation, was one George Burroughs, also a minister of Salem. He had, it seems, buried two wives, both of whom the busy gossips said he had used ill in their life-time, and, consequently, it was whispered that he had murdered them. He was accustomed, foolishly, to vaunt that he knew what people said of him in his absence, and this was brought as a proof that he dealt with the devil. Two



women, who were witnesses against him, interrupted their testimony with exclaiming that they saw the ghosts of the murdered wives present (who had promised them they would come), though no one else in the court saw them ; and this was taken in evidence. Burroughs conducted himself in a very injudicious way on his trial ; but, when he came to be hanged, made so impressive a speech on the ladder, with fervent protestations of innocence, as melted many of the spectators into tears.

The accusations, founded upon such stories as these, spread, with wonderful rapidity. In Salem, many were seized with fits, exhibited frightful contortions of their limbs and features, and became a fearful spectacle to the bystanders. They were asked to assign the cause of all this ; and pretended to suppose, that they saw some neighbour, already solitary and afflicted, and on that account in ill odour with the townspeople, scowling upon, threatening, and tormenting them. Presently persons, specially gifted with the ' spectral sight,' formed a class by themselves, and were sent about at the public expense from place to place, that they might see what no one else could see. The prisons were filled with the persons accused, and the utmost horror was entertained, as of a calamity which in such a degree had never before visited that part of the world. It happened, most unfortunately, that Baxter's " Certainty of the World of Spirits " had been published but the year before, and a number of copies had been sent out to New England. There seemed a strange coincidence and sympathy between vital Christianity in its most honourable sense, and the fear of the devil, who appeared to be " come down unto them, with great wrath." Mr Increase Mather, and Mr Cotton Mather, his son, two clergymen of the highest reputation in the neighbourhood, by the solemnity and awe with

which they treated the subject, and the earnestness and zeal which they displayed, gave a sanction to the lowest superstition and virulence of the ignorant. All the forms of justice were brought forward on this occasion. There was no lack of judges, and grand juries, and petty juries, and executioners, and still less of prosecutors and witnesses. The first person that was hanged was on the 10th of June, five more on the 19th of July, five on the 19th of August, and eight on the 22nd of September. Multitudes confessed that they were witches; for this appeared the only way for the accused to save their lives. Husbands and children fell down on their knees, and implored their wives and mothers to own their guilt. Many were tortured by being tied neck and heels together, till they confessed whatever was suggested to them. It is remarkable, however, that not one persisted in her confession at the place of execution.

The most interesting story that occurred in this affair, was of Giles Cory, and Martha, his wife. The woman was tried on the 9th of September, and hanged on the 22nd. In the interval, on the 16th, the husband was brought up for trial. He said he was not guilty; but being asked how he would be tried, he refused to go through the customary form, and say, "By God and my country." He observed that, of all that had been tried, not one had as yet been pronounced not guilty; and he resolutely refused in that mode to undergo a trial. The judge directed, therefore, that according to the barbarous mode prescribed in the mother country, he should be laid on his back, and pressed to death with weights gradually accumulated on the upper surface of his body, a proceeding which had never yet been resorted to by the English in North America. The man persisted in his resolution, and remained mute till he expired.

The whole of this dreadful tragedy, says Mr Godwin, in his "Lives of the Necromancers," was kept together by a thread. The spectre-seers, for a considerable time, prudently restricted their accusations to persons of ill repute, or otherwise of no consequence in the community. By-and-bye, however, they lost sight of this caution, and pretended they saw the figures of some persons well connected, and of unquestioned honour and reputation, engaged in acts of witchcraft. Immediately the whole fell through in a moment. The leading inhabitants presently saw how unsafe it would be to trust their reputations and their lives to the mercy of these profligate accusers. Of fifty-six bills of indictment that were offered to the grand jury on the 3rd of January, 1693, twenty-six only were found true bills, and thirty thrown out. On the twenty-six bills that were found, three persons only were pronounced guilty by the petty jury, and these three received their pardon from the Government. The prisons were thrown open; fifty confessed witches, together with two hundred persons imprisoned on suspicion, were set at liberty, and no more accusations were heard of. The "afflicted," as they were technically termed, recovered their health; the "spectral sight" was universally scouted; and men began to wonder how they could ever have been the victims of so horrible a delusion.

Dr Cook, in his "General and Historical Review of Christianity," gives a melancholy description of the condemnation of a woman for witchcraft, by a tribunal at Geneva, about the middle of the seventeenth century. An enumeration of some of the particulars of this case will afford a tolerably correct notion of the horrible cruelty, which, in almost all proceedings against witchcraft, was practised in different parts of Europe. The woman was accused of having sent devils into two young women, and of



having brought distempers upon several others — a charge sufficiently vague. To substantiate the accusation, the members of the tribunal availed themselves of an opinion, that the devil imprinted certain marks upon his chosen disciples, the effect of which was, that no pain could be produced by any application to the parts of the body where these marks were. They sent two surgeons to examine whether such marks could be discovered in the accused ; who reported, not much to the credit of their medical skill and philosophy, that they had found a mark, and that, having thrust a needle into it, the length of a finger, she had felt no pain, and that no blood had issued from the wound. Being brought to the bar, the prisoner denied the statement of the surgeons ; upon which she was examined by three more, with whom were joined two physicians. It might have been expected that a body of men, who had received a liberal education, and who must have had some acquaintance with the nature and construction of the human frame, would have presented a report, showing the absurdity of the examination upon which they were employed. This, however, did not occur to them ; for they gravely proceeded to thrust sharp instruments into the mark already mentioned, and into others which they thought they had found out ; but, as the miserable patient gave plain indication that she suffered from their operations, they were staggered, and satisfied themselves with declaring, that there was something extraordinary in the marks, and that they were not perfectly like those commonly to be seen in witches. She was, notwithstanding, doomed to another investigation, the result of which was, that after some barbarous experiments, she felt no pain, and hence it was inferred that the marks were satanical. She had, previously to this last inquiry, been actually put to

the rack ; but she retained her fortitude and presence of mind, firmly maintaining that she had sent no devils into the persons whom it was alleged she had thus injured. She was again threatened with the torture ; and, from dread of undergoing it, made a confession, which it is painful to think was not at once discerned to be the raving of insanity. Similar proceedings were continued ; and the conclusion of the whole was, that she was condemned to be hanged and burned, for giving up herself to the devil, and for bewitching two girls !

We conclude this article by the well-known case of the trial and acquittal of Lady Fowlis.

Catherine Ross, Lady Fowlis, was the daughter of Ross of Balnagown, and second wife of the fifteenth Baron of Fowlis. The object of her crimes was to destroy her step-sons, Robert and Hector Monro, with about thirty of their principal kinsmen, in order that her own children might succeed to the possessions of their father, which were considerable, and lay in the counties of Ross, Sutherland, and Inverness. Her brother, George Ross, seems to have been in league with her for the accomplishment of this diabolical purpose, and his wife, the young Lady Balnagown, was marked out as a victim, whose removal, with that of the rest of the family, might pave the way for his marriage with the wife of Robert Monro, the young laird. Their schemes were brought into active operation in the summer of 1577. Towards the end of that year, four of their accomplices, Agnes Roy, Christian Ross, of Canorth, William M'Gillievoricdam, and Thomas M'Kane More M'Allan M'Evoch, were arraigned in a justice court, held in the Cathedral Kirk of Ross, convicted, and burnt. One of the judges who presided at this trial was Robert Monro, the husband of the principal instigator of the crimes, and father of the family whose lives were

practised against. Lady Fowlis, upon the discovery of her wickedness, fled into the county of Caithness, and, after remaining there for the space of three quarters of a year, her husband was persuaded to receive her home again; and she seems to have lived unmolested during the rest of the life of the old baron; and even the young laird, for whose destruction she had perseveringly laboured, made no exertion to bring her to justice. His brother Hector, however, on succeeding him in 1590, procured a commission for the punishment of certain witches and sorcerers, which was understood to be aimed at his step-mother; but before he had time to act upon the power thus granted, she had influence enough to obtain a suspension of the commission; and it was not till July, 1591, that she was brought to trial. The evidence mainly rested upon, was that of the notoriety of the facts, and the confession of the accomplices; each count of the indictment closed with a reference to the record of the process before the provincial court, with the occasional addition of "as is notour," "as is manifest be the hail countie of Roiss," or words to that effect. The verdict was favourable to the accused, but Mr Pitcairn is of opinion that her escape was owing to her powerful influence. "The inquest," he says, "bears all the appearance of a selected or packed jury, being very inferior in rank and station of life, contrary to the usual custom." The dittory or indictment is the only part of the proceedings that is preserved; indeed, the reading of it seems to have constituted the whole case of the prosecutor, and the simple denial of the "samin and the hail poyntis thereof," the whole case for the accused; after which the jury retired to consider their verdict.

The first method adopted to compass the deaths of the persons who stood in the way of her ambition, was to form figures to represent the young Laird of



Fowlis and the young Lady Balnagown, which were to be shot at with elf-arrows, in conformity with the belief, that, if these charmed weapons struck the typical bodies, the wounds would be felt in the real bodies, and produce invisibly the desired effect. For the performance of the necessary rites, a meeting of three witches took place in the house of Christian Ross, at Canorth, Christian herself being one of them, Lady Fowlis another, and Marjory M'Allester, a hag of peculiar eminence, distinguished also by the name of Loskie Loncart, the third. Having constructed two images of clay, they placed them on the north side of the western chamber, and Loskie, producing two elf-arrows, delivered one to Christian Ross, who stood by with it in her hand, while, with the other, Lady Fowlis shot twice at the figure of Lady Balnagown, and Loskie three times at that of Robert Monro, without success. In the mean time, the images not having been properly compacted, crumbled to pieces; and their purpose being thus thwarted for the present, the unhallowed convocation broke up, Loskie having engaged, at the command of Lady Fowlis, to make two other figures. M'Gillievoricdam seems now to have been taken into their counsels; and by his advice, an image in butter of the young Laird of Fowlis was placed by the side of the wall in the same western chamber of Canorth, and shot at eight times with an elf-arrow by Loskie, without effect. This was on the 2nd of July, 1577; and nothing discouraged by repeated failures, a clay figure of the same person was constructed on the 6th, when the indefatigable Loskie discharged the elf-arrow twelve times, sometimes reaching the image, but never wounding it. The other two hags stood by, anxiously watching for a successful shot, Christian Ross having provided three quarters of fine linen cloth, to be bound about the typical corpse, which was to be interred

opposite the gate of the Stank of Fowlis, in order to complete the enactment by a full representation of every circumstance which they were desirous of producing as its consequence. The main part of the rite, however, consisted in the infliction of a wound ; and this not having been accomplished, they desisted from the vain labour.

The more secret arts of witchcraft having failed to effect the desired ends, Lady Fowlis next had recourse to poison ; and numerous were the consultations held to concoct drugs and devise means for administering them. The same assistants figured as the chief agents in this equally abominable work. A stoup full of poisoned ale was first mixed in the barn of Drumnyer, but opportunity not serving for its immediate use, it was kept three nights in the kiln, and the stoup being leaky, the liquor was lost, all but a very small quantity ; to prove the strength of which, Lady Fowlis caused her servant lad, Donald Mackay, to swallow it. The three confederates were assembled on this occasion, and as the draught did not kill the boy, but only threw him into a state of stupor, Loskie Loncart was dismissed, with an injunction to make " ane pig-full of ranker poysoune." The obedient hag prepared the potion, and sent it to her patroness, by whom it was delivered to her nurse, Mary More, to be conveyed to Angus Leith's house, where the young laird then was, that it might be employed for his destruction. Night was the time chosen for despatching her on this errand : she broke the vessel by the way, spilt the liquor, and, wishing probably to ascertain the nature of what had been intrusted to her under such circumstances of mystery, tasted it, and paid the forfeit of her curiosity with her life ; and what helps to show the deadly qualities of their preparation, the indictment adds, that " the place quhair the said pig brak, the gers

that grew upon the samin wes so hirsch by (beyond) the natur of other gers, that nather cow nor scheip evir preavit (tasted) thairof." It were endless to detail all the traffickings and messengers kept scouring the country to collect the required quantity of poison. Loskie Loncart was lodged and maintained a whole summer in Christian Ross's house, for the greater convenience of assisting to drug drinks, and devise means of administering them. M'Gillievoricdam was sent to consult the gipsies about the most effectual way of poisoning the young laird. He also purchased a quantity of the powder used to destroy rats, of a merchant in Elgin, and another portion in Tain, and was strictly questioned by Lady Fowlis whether it would suit best to mix the ingredient with egg, brose, or kail. No fitting opportunity seems to have occurred for administering any of the portions to Robert Monro; but, after three interviews, John M'Farquhar, Lady Balnagown's cook, was prevailed upon by the present of two ells of grey cloth, a shirt, and twelve and fourpence (Scots), to lend them his aid in accomplishing their purpose on his mistress. That young lady being to entertain a party of friends one night at her house at Ardmore, a witch, named Catherine Mynday, carried poison thither to M'Farquhar, who poured it on the principal dish, which was kidneys. This woman remained to witness the effects, and afterwards declared that she "skunnerit," or revolted at the sight, which was "the sarest and maist cruell that evir scho saw, seeing the vomit and vexacioun that was on the young Lady Balnagown and her company." The victim of these horrible practices did not die immediately, but contracted a deadly sickness, "quhairin," says the indictment, "scho remains yet (that is twelve years after taking the poison) incurable."

The persons named as privy to the designs of



Lady Fowlis were numerous, and included the daughter of a baronet of her own name, whose interest in the matter seems to have been merely that of a connection, or, at most, a clanswoman; and the bribes with which she purchased assistance and secrecy were of the paltriest kind. She provided lodgings in the houses of her adherents, for some whom she wished to have near her, for the better maturing of her schemes. The cook of young Lady Balnagown was bribed, as we have seen, with little more than a shirt and a shilling sterling! The fidelity of Christian Ross was bespoken, by reminding her that she ought not to reveal anything against one who was her lady and mistress. Another of the gang was paid with 'ane-half furlett of meill.' M'Gillievoricdam got four ells of linen for his trouble, but, besides, appropriated six and eightpence (Scots) of the money given to him to be expended for poison; at other times, however, this person was conciliated with 20s., a firloft of meal, five ells of linen, and 16s. The brother of Lady Fowlis is also said to have promised to Thomas M'Kane More M'Allan M'Evoch 'ane garmounthe of clais' (suit of clothes) for his services in the same base plot.

From a review of this whole case, with others of the same date, it will appear that the crimes of former times were distinguished from those of the present day, not so much by the greater atrocity of any single act, as by the length of time for which they were meditated, and the number of persons admitted to a knowledge of them, without any fear of disclosure. They were the offspring of habitual thought rather than the effect of sudden starts of passion.

Immediately after the acquittal of Lady Fowlis, her step-son and prosecutor, the seventeenth Baron of Fowlis, was presented at the bar on an accusation in some respects similar, of which he also was found not guilty, by a jury, the majority of whom had sat

on the preceding trial. In January, 1588-9, this gentleman being taken ill, sent a servant with his own horse, to bring to his assistance Marion M'Ingarach, who is characterised as being 'ane of the maist notorious and rank wichis in all this realme,' and who, as soon as she entered the house where he lay sick, gave him three drinks of water from three stones (probably rude stone cups). After a long consultation, she declared there was no hope of recovery, unless the principal man of the patient's house should suffer death for him; and it was determined, after some discussion, that this substitute should be George Monro, eldest son of Catharine Monro, Lady Fowlis. A plan was next devised for transferring the *onus moriendi*, for the present, to George; according to which, in the first place, no person was to have admittance to the house in which Hector lay, until his half-brother came; and on his arrival, the sick man, with his left hand, was to take his visitor by the right, and not to speak until spoken to by him. In conformity with these injunctions, several friends, who called to inquire for the patient, were excluded, and messengers were despatched, both to George Monro's house and to other parts of the country, where he was thought to be engaged in the sports of the chase. Before he could be found, seven expresses had been sent after him, and five days expired. On the intelligence that his brother earnestly desired to see him, he repaired to the place, and was received in the form prescribed by the witch, Hector with his left hand grasping George's right, and abstaining from speaking until asked "how he did," to which he replied, "the better that you have come to visit me," and he uttered not a word more, notwithstanding his urgency to obtain an interview. The younger Monro having, in this manner, been brought fairly within the compass of the witch's spells she that

night mustered certain of her accomplices and having provided spades, repaired to a spot where two laird's lands met, and, at 'ane after midnycht,' digged a grave of the exact length of Hector Monro, and laid the turf of it carefully aside. They then came home, and M'Ingarach gave her assistants instructions concerning the part that each was to perform in the remaining ceremonies. The object—namely, the preservation of Hector's life and the death of George in his stead—being now openly stated, some of those present objected, that if the latter should be cut off suddenly, the hue and cry would be raised, and all their lives would be in danger. They therefore pressed the presiding witch not to make the sacrifice immediately, but to cause it to follow after such an interval as might obviate suspicion, which she accordingly engaged to accomplish, and warranted him to live till the 17th day of the ensuing April, at least. This being arranged to the satisfaction of the persons assembled, the sick man was laid on a pair of blankets, and carried out to the place where the grave had been prepared. The party were strictly enjoined to be silent, and only M'Ingarach and Christian Neill, Hector's foster-mother, were to utter the necessary incantations. Being come to the spot, their living burden was deposited in the grave, the turf being spread over him, and held down by staves. M'Ingarach stood by the side of the grave, and Neill, holding a boy, a son of Hector Leith, by the hand, ran the breadth of nine rings, then returned, and demanded, 'which is your choice?' Thereupon the other replied, 'Mr Hector, I choose you to live, and your brother George to die for you.' This form of conjuration was twice gone through that night; and, on its completion, the sick man was lifted, carried home—not one of the company uttering a word further—and replaced in bed.



To the efficacy of this spell was attributed not only the recovery of Hector, but the death of George Monro, though the latter continued in perfect health not only for the time warranted by the witch, but for a year longer. He was taken ill in April, 1590, and died on the 3rd of June following. M'Ingarach was highly favoured by the gentleman who supposed he owed to her his life. As soon as his health was restored, 'be the dewilisch moyan foir-said,' he carried her to the house of his uncle at Kilurmmody, where she was entertained with as much obsequious attention as if she had been his spouse, and obtained such pre-eminence in the country that no one durst offend her, though her ostensible character was only that of keeper to his sheep. Upon the information of Lady Fowlis, the protector of M'Ingarach was compelled to present her at Aberdeen, where she was examined before the king, and produced the stones out of which she had made the baron drink. These enchanted cups were delivered to the keeping of the justice clerk; but we are not informed as to the fate of the witch herself.

The indictment charged the prisoner that 'ye gat yowr health be the develisch means foirsaid.' And further, it said, 'ye are indicted for art and part of the cruel, odious, and shameful slaughter of the said George Monro, your brother, by the enchantments and witchcrafts used upon him by you and of your devise, by speaking to him within youre bed, taking of him by the right hand, conform to the injunctions given to you by the said Marian Ingarach, in the said month of January, 1589 years; *throw the which inchantmentis he tuke ane deidlie seiknets in the moneth of Apryle, 1590 yetris, and continew and thairin until Junii thairafter, diceissit in the said moneth of Junii, being the third day of that instant!*'

## WILLIAM CORDER

EXECUTED FOR THE MURDER OF MARIA MARTEN

THE murder for which this most diabolical criminal merited and justly underwent condign punishment, rivalled in cold-blooded atrocity that of the unfortunate Mr Weare, and was as foul and dark a crime as ever stained the annals of public justice. The wretched victim of his offence was born in July, 1801, and was brought up by her father, who was a mole-catcher at Polstead in Suffolk, where she received an education far superior to her situation in life. Possessed of more than ordinary personal advantages—a pretty face, and a fine form and figure—it is little to be wondered at that she was beset by admirers; and that, artless and inexperienced as she was, she should have imprudently fixed her affections upon an unworthy object. An unfortunate step ruined the character of the young woman, and a second mishap with a gentleman of fortune, residing in the neighbourhood of her father's house, left her a child, which at the time of her death was three years and a half old. About the year 1826 she formed a third *liaison* with the man who became her deliberate murderer.

William Corder was the son of an opulent farmer at Polstead, and having become acquainted with the unfortunate girl Marten, the consequence of an illicit intercourse which took place between them, was a child. From that time he became much attached to her, and was a frequent visitor at her

father's house. The child died within a short period of its birth, and from the circumstances of its having died suddenly, and of Corder having taken it away at night, and disposed of its body in a manner which he would never explain, an idea was entertained that it had come unfairly by its death. However strongly this notion may have taken possession of the public mind, after the apprehension of Corder, it does not appear that any real evidence was ever produced publicly, to support the impression which had got abroad ; but certain it is, that the unhappy girl made use of the circumstance as a means of endeavouring to procure the father of the child to fulfil a promise which he had made, that he would make her his wife. On the 18th of May, 1827, Corder called at the house of old Marten, and then expressed his willingness that the ceremony should be performed ; and he said that, in order that no time should be lost, and that the marriage might be as private as possible, he had made up his mind to have it celebrated by licence instead of by banns. The next day was appointed for the wedding, and he persuaded the unhappy girl to dress herself in a suit of his clothes, so as to secure the greatest secrecy, and to accompany him to a part of his premises called the Red Barn, where she could exchange them for her own, and from whence he would convey her in a gig, which he had in readiness, to a church at Ipswich. The girl having consented to this singular proposition, Corder immediately quitted the house, and he was soon after followed by his unhappy victim, who carried with her such part of her own clothes as would be necessary to appear with in church. In the course of a conversation which took place between Corder and the mother of the girl, before their going away, the former repeatedly declared his intention to make the girl his lawful wife, and he



urged as a reason why she should go with him immediately, that he knew that a warrant had been issued against her, for her bastard children. Within a few minutes after Corder had quitted the house, he was seen by the brother of the girl walking in the direction towards the Red Barn, with a pick-axe over his shoulder ; but from this time nothing was ever heard of the unfortunate girl, except through the fictitious communications received from Corder, who still remained at his mother's house at Polstead. The return of Maria Marten had been expected to take place within one or two days after the time of her quitting her father's house ; but as she had occasionally before exhibited considerable irregularity in the duration of her visits to Corder, and as, besides, there was an understanding that the latter should procure her a temporary lodging, little anxiety or alarm was at first felt at her prolonged absence. A fortnight having elapsed, however, her mother proceeded to question Corder upon the subject, when he declared that she was quite safe and well, and that he had placed her at some distance, lest his friends might discover the fact of his marriage, and exhibit displeasure at the circumstance. Having thus from time to time put off the inquiries which were made of him, in the month of September, declaring that he was in ill health, he quitted Suffolk with the avowed object of proceeding to the Continent ; and it is not a little remarkable, that before he left Polstead, he expressed great anxiety that the Red Barn should be well filled with stock, a desire which he personally saw fulfilled. He took with him about 400*l.* in money ; and several letters were subsequently received by his mother, who was a widow, as well as the Martens, in which he stated that he was living at the Isle of Wight with Maria. It was remarked that although he represented his residence to be in the

Isle of Wight, his letters always bore the London postmark; and at length strange surmises and suspicions began to be entertained, in consequence of no personal communication having yet been received from his supposed wife. The parents of the unhappy girl became more and more disturbed and dissatisfied; and the circumstances, which eventually led to the discovery of this most atrocious crime, are of so extraordinary and romantic a nature, as almost to manifest an especial interposition of Providence in marking out the offender. In the course of the month of March, 1828, Mrs Marten dreamed on three successive nights that her daughter had been murdered and buried in the Red Barn. Terrified at the repetition of the vision, an undefined suspicion, which she had always entertained, that her daughter had been unfairly dealt with, appeared fully confirmed in her own mind; and so lively were her feelings, and so convinced was she of the truth of the augury, that on Saturday, the 19th of April, she persuaded her husband to apply for permission to examine the Red Barn, with the professed object of looking for their daughter's clothes. The grain which had been deposited in the barn had by this time been removed, and the permission having been obtained, the wretched father proceeded to the accomplishment of the object he had in view. He applied himself to the spot pointed out to his wife in her dream, as the place in which her daughter's remains were deposited; and there, upon digging, he turned up a piece of the shawl which he knew his daughter had worn at the time of her quitting her home. Alarmed at the discovery, he prosecuted his search still further, and having dug to the depth of eighteen inches, with his rake he dragged out a part of a human body. Horror-struck, he staggered from the spot; but subsequent examination proved that

his suspicions were well founded, and that it was indeed his murdered daughter, the place of deposit of whose remains had been so remarkably pointed out. The body, as may be supposed, was in an advanced state of decomposition ; but the dress, which was perfect, and certain marks in the teeth of the deceased, afforded sufficient proofs of her identity.

As may be imagined, the whole neighbourhood was in an uproar of confusion at this most extraordinary circumstance ; and information was immediately conveyed to the coroner, in order that an inquest might be held. By the time a coroner's jury had assembled, a surgical examination of the body had taken place ; and Mr John Lawden, a surgeon, proved, that there were appearances yet remaining sufficient to indicate that the deceased had come to her death by violent means. He said that there was a visible appearance of blood on the face and on the clothes of the deceased, and also on a handkerchief which was round the neck ; that the handkerchief appeared to have been tied extremely tight, and beneath the folds, a wound was visible in the throat, which had evidently been inflicted by some sharp instrument. There was also a wound in the orbit of the right eye ; and it seemed as if something had been thrust in which had fractured the small bones, and penetrated the brain. On the finding of the body, it was partly enveloped in a sack, and it was clothed only in a shift, flannel petticoat, stays, stockings, and shoes.

No sooner had the body been discovered than all eyes turned to Corder as the murderer ; and information having been despatched to London, Lea, an officer of Lambeth-street, was forthwith sent in pursuit of the supposed offender. With a loose clue only he traced him from place to place, until at length he found him residing at Grove House,



Ealing-lane, near Brentford, where, in conjunction with his wife, whom he had married only about five months before, and to whom, it was said, he had introduced himself through the medium of a matrimonial advertisement, he was carrying on a school for young ladies. It was necessary to employ a degree of stratagem to obtain admission to the house; but at length, Lea, having represented that he had a daughter, whom he wished to put to school, he was introduced to a parlour, where he found the object of his search sitting at breakfast with four ladies. He was in his dressing-gown, and he had his watch before him, with which he was minuting the boiling of some eggs. The officer having called him on one side, informed him that he had a serious charge against him, and inquired whether he was not acquainted with a person named Maria Marten at Polstead; but he denied that he had any knowledge of such a person even by name. He was then secured; and upon his house being searched, a brace of pistols, a powder-flask, and some balls, were found in a velvet bag, which on its being subsequently seen by Mrs Marten, was immediately identified by her as having been in the possession of her daughter at the time of her quitting her house for the last time. A sharp-pointed dagger was also found, and this was identified by a person named Offord, a cutler, as being one which he had ground for the prisoner within a few days before the murder was committed. The prisoner immediately on his apprehension was conducted to Polstead, in order that he might undergo an examination before the coroner; and the most lively interest was exhibited by the vast crowds of people who had assembled, to catch a glimpse of him on his being brought into the town. On his appearance before the coroner, he was dreadfully agitated; and the circumstances which we

have described having been deposed to by various witnesses, a verdict of "Wilful Murder" was returned against William Corder.

The unhappy prisoner was immediately conveyed to the county jail to await his trial; but he had hardly been lodged within its walls, before a new charge, namely, that of forgery upon the Manningtree Bank, was laid against him. It appears, however, that through the intervention of his friends, this case was eventually compromised. The wife of the prisoner, upon his first apprehension, was under an impression that the offence imputed to her husband was that of bigamy; but she was soon informed of the real nature of the allegations made against him. During his detention in jail, she visited him nearly every day; and she continued to declare her belief, that the statements which appeared in the papers with regard to his guilt were untrue; and that he would eventually be relieved by a jury of his country from the foul calumnies which were published against him.

Thursday, 7th of August in the same year, was appointed for the trial of this malefactor, and the anxiety to witness the proceedings in court, or to obtain early information in reference to the case, which almost universally prevailed, was strongly manifested by the assembling of hundreds of well-dressed persons of both sexes, round the front and back entrances to the Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds, as early as five o'clock in the morning of that day. The rain fell in torrents, but many persons braving the weather, remained without shelter until nine o'clock, when the Lord Chief Baron (Alexander) arrived, to try the prisoner. At the moment his lordship gained admission to the court, the scene which presented itself beggars description. The barristers who attended the circuit, amongst whom were to be observed the counsel for the pro-

secution and the defence, in vain struggled against the pressure of the opposing crowd, and many of them, at the moment they had almost attained their object, were carried back in an exhausted state to the extremest verge of the assembled multitude. When his lordship had taken his seat on the bench, the names of the jury who had been summoned to try the prisoner were called over; but the crowd was so great, and the sheriff's force so ineffective, that it was almost impossible to make way for them into the court. They were after the lapse of nearly an hour brought over the heads of the crowd into the passage leading into the hall; some with their coats torn, their shoes off, and nearly fainting.

Nor was the curiosity of the public confined to the court-house. Hundreds had early assembled at the door of the jail, and along the road leading thence to the Shire Hall, anxious to catch a glimpse of the accused. He left the jail at a quarter before nine o'clock, having previously attired himself with much care in a new suit of black, and combed his hair over his forehead, which he had previously worn brushed up in front. Upon his being called from his cell, he made some inquiries with regard to the number of witnesses who were to be called for the prosecution, and also with regard to the judges by whom he was to be tried, and his queries having been answered, he exclaimed, "Well, whatever may be my fate, I shall meet it with fortitude." He was then removed in a chaise cart from the jail to the Hall, and although he hung down his head all the way, he seemed little affected by the shouts and groans with which he was on all hands assailed. On his being taken to the felons' room, beneath the building, he remarked to Mr Orridge, the governor of the prison, "What a great number of persons! I scarcely ever saw such a crowd." At a quarter



past ten o'clock, the prisoner was brought into court and placed in the front of the dock. For a few moments he conversed with his solicitor, but then he looked up to the bench, and bowed respectfully. On account of the number of challenges made by the prisoner, it was some time before a jury was empanelled. At length, however, the prisoner was arraigned upon the indictment preferred against him. It contained ten counts. In the first, the murder was alleged to have been committed by the prisoner on the 18th of May, 1827, by discharging a pistol, loaded with powder and shot, upon Maria Marten, and thereby giving her a mortal wound on the left side of the face; and that by those means, wilfully, feloniously, and of his malice aforethought, he caused the death of the said Maria Marten. The second count laid the offence as having been committed by striking the deceased with a sword upon the left side of the body, between the fifth and sixth ribs, and thereby giving her a mortal wound, of which she instantly died; the third count stated that the murder was committed by striking the deceased with a sword on the left side of the face; the fourth, that it was done by sticking and stabbing her with a sword on the right side of her neck; the fifth, that the prisoner fastened a handkerchief around her neck, and thereby choked her; the sixth, that he killed her by discharging a gun loaded with powder and shot on the left side of her face; the seventh, that he pushed and thrust her into a hole made in the floor of a barn, and, by covering her with large quantities of earth and gravel, suffocated and choked her; the eighth was only technically different from the preceding one; the ninth laid the offence to have been committed by the joint means of sticking the deceased with a sword on the left side, and fastening a handkerchief round her neck; the tenth described

it as being done by the joint force of all the felonious acts laid in the whole of the preceding counts—recapitulating the wounds, stabbing, shooting, strangulation, and smothering, as the cause of the death of the deceased.

The prisoner having pleaded Not Guilty in a firm and distinct voice, the trial commenced. The evidence which was now adduced differed but slightly in effect from the circumstances which we have detailed. Proof was, however, given in support of the first and sixth counts of the indictment, that at the time of the discovery of the body of the deceased marks were distinctly visible, which showed that she had received a pistol-shot or a gun-shot wound; and it was also proved, by the brother of the deceased girl, that the prisoner, at the time of his quitting the house of old Marten on the day of the murder, carried a loaded gun. A number of letters were likewise put in, which had been written by the prisoner to the father of the deceased in reference to his intended marriage with his daughter.

The prisoner, on being called upon for his defence, read a manuscript paper in a low and tremulous tone of voice. He declared that he deeply deplored the death of the unfortunate female in question; and he urged the jury to dismiss from their minds all that prejudice which must necessarily have been excited against him, by the foul imputations which had been cast upon him by the public press. He admitted that the evidence which had been adduced, was sufficient to create some suspicion against him; but he trusted that the explanation which he should give of the circumstances, would at once explain, to their satisfaction, the real bearings of the case. He then proceeded to say, "No man regrets more sincerely than I do the death of the unfortunate Maria, the circumstances attending which I am now about to state; and much have I

to regret, that I for a moment concealed them, but I did so because I was stupefied and horror-struck at the time, and knew not how to act. You have heard of the nature of my connection with the unfortunate Maria ; that connection was contrary to the will of my mother, and to conceal her situation, I took lodgings for her at Sudbury, where she was confined. In the usual time she returned to her father's house ; in a fortnight after which the infant died—not, as has been intimated, by violence, but a natural death. Being anxious to conceal the circumstance from my friends and neighbours, it was agreed between her father, and mother, and myself, that Maria and I should bury the child in the fields, and we took it away for that purpose. After this Maria returned to my house at Polstead ; and by means of a private staircase I took her to my own room, where she remained concealed for two days. The pistols which have been spoken of were hanging up in the room loaded. I had before that shown her the use of them, and on returning to her father's, she, by some means unknown to me, contrived to get the pistols into her possession. It is well known that at that period Maria was much depressed in spirits, and was anxious that I should marry her, although I had reason to suspect that she was at the time in correspondence with a gentleman in London by whom she had had a child. My friends objected to the match, and I declined it at the time. But although poor Maria's conduct was not altogether free from blame, I was much attached to her, and at length agreed to her wishes ; and it was arranged that we should go to Ipswich and obtain a licence for that purpose. Whether I did or did not say anything about a warrant having been issued by the parish officers for her apprehension, I cannot now pretend to say ; but if I did, it must have been because such a report



was abroad at the time. It was agreed that Maria should go in male attire to the Red Barn so often mentioned in the course of the trial. You have heard from the mother of the unfortunate Maria, that she and I had had words. As we proceeded to the Barn she was in tears. To that Barn we had often repaired before, and frequently passed the night there. When we reached the Barn, words arose, and Maria flew into a passion. I told her that if we were to be married, and to live together, she must not go on so. Much conversation ensued, and on changing her dress, she at length told me, that if we were married we should never be happy together—that I was too proud to marry her and take her to my mother's, and that she did not regard me. I was highly irritated, and asked her, if she was to go on this way before marriage, what was I to expect after? She again upbraided me, and being in a passion, I told her I would not marry her, and turned from the Barn, but I had scarcely reached the gate when a report of a pistol reached my ear. I returned to the Barn, and with horror beheld the unfortunate girl extended on the floor, apparently dead: I was for a short time stupefied with horror, and knew not what to do. It struck me to run for a surgeon; and well would it have been for me had I done so. But I raised the unfortunate girl, in order, if possible, to afford her some assistance; but I found her altogether lifeless; and, to my horror, I discovered that the dreadful act had been committed by one of my own pistols, and that I was the only person in existence who could tell how the fatal act took place. The sudden alarm which seized me suspended my faculties, and I was some time before I could perceive the awful situation in which I was placed, and the suspicions which must naturally arise from my having delayed to make the circumstance instantly known. I, at length, found

that concealment was the only means by which I could rescue myself from the horrid imputation ; and I resolved to bury the body as well as I was able. Having done so, I subsequently accounted for her absence in the manner described by the witnesses, saying sometimes one thing to one person, and at other times other things to another. I may be asked why, if innocent of the crime imputed to me, I felt it necessary to give those answers ? To which I answer, that some persons are driven to do acts from fear which others do from guilt, which is precisely the case with me in this instance. It may be asked, too, why I have not called evidence to prove the facts I have stated ; but, gentlemen, I put it to you whether things do not sometimes take place which are only known to the parties between whom they happen ; and what direct proof can I give when the only person who knew of these facts is no more ? I can for the same reason give no direct proof of the unhappy woman's having got possession of my pistols. I say pistols, because I found the other loaded pistol in the unfortunate Maria's reticule. As to the stabs and other wounds described by the witnesses, I can only say that no stab or cut was given by Maria or myself ; and I firmly believe that the surgeons would never have sworn to them, were it not for the circumstance of a sword having been found in the room in which I was arrested. If any stab did appear on the body, it must have been done with the instrument used in disinterring it."

Having concluded his address by a strong appeal to the jury upon the probabilities of the case, a number of witnesses were called, who spoke to the prisoner's good character. The Lord Chief Baron summed up, and a verdict of " Guilty " was returned. At this point the prisoner was first observed to raise his handkerchief to his eyes ; and

during the subsequent passing of the sentence of death, he seemed to be dreadfully affected. On his return to the jail, he seemed to recover his spirits ; but the only desire which he expressed was, that he should be permitted to see his wife. To this request an immediate assent was given, and at two o'clock on the Saturday afternoon, she was admitted to the prisoner. The meeting between her and her wretched husband was of a most affecting character, and it did not terminate until near an hour had elapsed. During that evening, the prisoner was constantly attended by the reverend chaplain of the jail ; but notwithstanding the religious exhortations which he received, he exhibited no inclination to make any confession of his crime. On the following day the prisoner attended chapel in the customary manner, and during the performance of the service he appeared deeply affected. On his return to his cell, he threw himself upon his bed and wept bitterly for a considerable time. In the course of the afternoon, it was hinted to him that his defence could scarcely be believed ; but in answer he said that, " Confession to God was all that was necessary, and that confession to man was what he called popedom or popery, and he never would do it." It was subsequently suggested to him that he must have had great nerve to dig the grave while the body lay in his sight, when his reply was, " Nobody knows that the body lay in the barn and in sight, whilst I dug the hole ;" but then, suddenly checking himself, he exclaimed, " O God ! nobody will dig my grave." In the course of the afternoon, he had a second and last interview with his wife, and the scene was truly heartrending. He expressed the most anxious fears with regard to the manner in which she would be in future treated by the world ; and implored her, should she ever marry again, to be cautious how she accepted a



proposition reaching her through the equivocal medium of a public advertisement. The parting scene was most dreadful, and the wretched woman was carried away from the cell in a state of stupor. After Mrs Corder had retired, Mr Orridge, the worthy governor of the jail, made the strongest efforts to induce the unhappy prisoner to confess, pointing out to him how greatly he would add to his crime, should he quit the world still denying his guilt. Corder then exclaimed, "O sir, I wish I had made a confidant of you before, I often wished to have done it, but you know, sir, it was of no use to employ a legal adviser and then not follow his advice." Mr Orridge said that there was no doubt that was very proper, up to the time at which he was convicted, but that now all earthly considerations must cease. The wretched prisoner then exclaimed, "I am a guilty man," and immediately afterwards made the following confession:—

"Bury Jail, August 10, 1828—Condemned Cell,  
"Sunday Evening, Half-past Eleven."

"I acknowledge being guilty of the death of poor Maria Marten, by shooting her with a pistol. The particulars are as follows:—When we left her father's house we began quarrelling about the burial of the child, she apprehending that the place wherein it was deposited would be found out. The quarrel continued for about three-quarters of an hour upon this and about other subjects. A scuffle ensued, and during the scuffle, and at the time I think that she had hold of me, I took the pistol from the side-pocket of my velveteen jacket and fired. She fell, and died in an instant. I never saw even a struggle. I was overwhelmed with agitation and dismay—the body fell near the front doors on the floor of the barn. A vast quantity of blood issued from the wound, and ran on to the floor and

through the crevices. Having determined to bury the body in the barn (about two hours after she was dead), I went and borrowed the spade of Mrs Stowe ; but before I went there, I dragged the body from the barn into the chaff-house, and locked up the barn. I returned again to the barn, and began to dig the hole ; but the spade being a bad one, and the earth firm and hard, I was obliged to go home for a pick-axe and a better spade, with which I dug the hole, and then buried the body. I think I dragged the body by the handkerchief that was tied round her neck. It was dark when I finished covering up the body. I went the next day and washed the blood from off the barn floor. I declare to Almighty God I had no sharp instrument about me, and that no other wound but the one made by the pistol was inflicted by me. I have been guilty of great idleness, and at times led a dissolute life, but I hope through the mercy of God to be forgiven.

“ W. CORDER.”

“ Witness to the signing by the said William Corder,

“ JOHN ORRIDGE.”

On the next morning the confession was read over to the prisoner, and he declared that it was quite true ; and he further said, in answer to a question put to him by the under-sheriff, that he thought the ball entered the right eye.

He subsequently appeared much easier in his mind, and attended service in the chapel immediately before his being carried out for execution. He still wore the clothes in which he was dressed at the time of his trial. As allusions were made to his unhappy situation in the prayers which were read, he appeared convulsed with agony ; and when the service was over, although he appeared calm, his limbs gave up their office, and he was obliged to be carried to his cell.

At a few minutes before twelve o'clock he was removed from the dungeon in which he had been confined, and conveyed to the press-room, where he was pinioned by the hangman, who had been carried down from London for the purpose of superintending the execution. He was resigned, but was so weak as to be unable to stand without support. On his cravat being removed he groaned heavily, and appeared to be labouring under great mental agony. When his wrists and arms were made fast, he was led round towards the scaffold; and as he passed the different yards in which the prisoners were confined, he shook hands with them, and speaking to two of them by name, he said, "Good bye, God bless you!" They were considerably affected at the wretched appearance which he made; and "God bless you!" "May God receive your soul!" were frequently uttered as he passed along. The chaplain preceded the prisoner, reading the usual Burial Service, and the governor and officers walked immediately after him. The prisoner was supported up the steps which led to the scaffold; he looked somewhat wildly around, and a constable was obliged to support him while the hangman was adjusting the fatal cord. A few moments before the drop fell he groaned heavily, and would have fallen, had not a second constable caught hold of him. Everything having been made ready, the signal was given, the fatal drop fell, and the unfortunate man was launched into eternity. He did not struggle; but he raised his hands once or twice, as if in prayer; the hangman pulled his legs, and he was in a moment motionless. In about nine minutes, however, his shoulders appeared to rise in a convulsive movement; but life, it seemed, had left him without any great pain. Just before he was turned off, he said, in a feeble tone, "I am justly sentenced, and may God forgive me."



Mr Orridge then informed the crowd that the prisoner acknowledged the justice of his sentence, and died in peace with all men. Thus did this unhappy man terminate, by an ignominious death, a life which, judging from his age and healthy appearance, might have been prolonged to an advanced period in comfort and independence.

The mob collected on this occasion was computed to amount to upwards of seven thousand persons, and occupied every spot of ground from which a glimpse of the final scene of the wretched man's life could be obtained. A considerable portion of the persons collected were women; and as soon as the execution was over, they dispersed from before the drop, and proceeded to the Shire Hall, where a large number of persons had assembled in order to obtain a view of the body.

At two o'clock the body was exposed on the table in the centre of the Shire Hall; it was naked from the navel upwards. The crucial operation had been performed, and the skin of the breast and stomach turned back on each side. The body measured, as it lay, five feet five inches in length, and presented a very muscular appearance. The face and throat were somewhat swollen and discoloured, the right eye was open, and the left partially so; the mouth was also open sufficiently to show the teeth. The body was taken to the hospital the next day to be dissected, in pursuance of the sentence.

After the execution a spirited bidding took place for the rope which was used by the hangman; and as much as a guinea an inch was obtained for it. Large sums were offered for the pistols and dagger which were used in the murder, but they became the property of the sheriff of the county, who very properly refused to put them up to public competition. A piece of the skin of the wretched

malefactor, which had been tanned, was exhibited for a long time afterwards at the shop of a leather-seller in Oxford-street.

We regret to say that little credit is to be attached to the confession which was made by the unhappy man on the night before his execution ; for, taking the case in all its bearings, there can be little doubt that the murder was the result of premeditation. The pistols which the wretched malefactor carried with him had, according to the testimony of witnesses who were called for the defence, long been in his possession ; but we are at a loss to know with what object he should have carried them in his pocket, loaded as they were, on the day of the murder, unless with a preconceived intention of taking away the life of his unhappy paramour. Upon consideration of the main features of the case, we fear that, revolting as such a conclusion must be to all persons possessing the common feelings of humanity, it must be supposed that the unhappy Maria Marten was enticed by her bloodthirsty assassin to the Red Barn, for the sole purpose of being there murdered. Corder's possession of the gun and the pistols, as well as the circumstance of his having been seen carrying the pick-axe to the barn, all tend to confirm this belief ; and if a motive be looked for sufficient to induce the commission of this most heinous offence, a second murder, namely that of the infant child of the malefactor and his victim, and a desire to conceal a secret which he knew to be in the possession of the latter, and which might have been employed by her to the detriment of her seducer, may be at once assigned. There can be little hesitation in imputing so fearful an addition to his offence as that to which we have alluded to a man, whose cold-blooded villainy shines through every passage of his connection with his miserable victim, and of his subsequent life. His conduct in

buoying up the anxious and inquiring hopes of the girl's mother after the murder, in so long residing on the very spot where his crime had been committed, probably in the daily habit of visiting the very barn, which was at once the scene of the death, and the grave of the wretched girl, exhibit him to have possessed a heart callous to the feelings of a man. Frightful, however, as was his crime against society, awful as was the expedient to which he resorted to get rid of what he deemed an annoyance and an obstruction to his wishes and comfort, he committed a no less dreadful offence against the welfare and happiness of the woman whom he made his wife, in permitting her to enter into the bonds of matrimony with him—a wretch, for whom even the punishment which he received at the hands of justice was scarcely retributive; knowing, as he did, that accident, one false step of his own, a persevering inquiry as to the place of abode of the girl Marten, would at once and for ever blast the hopes which she might have formed of future peace and domestic felicity. The mode in which he proceeded in this new insult to humanity, at once exhibited a heart upon which the recollection of past guilt could produce no effect.

The advertisement which he caused to be inserted in the paper was in the following form:—

“ A private gentleman, aged twenty-four, entirely independent, whose disposition is not to be exceeded, has lately lost the chief of his family by the hand of Providence, which has occasioned amongst the remainder circumstances the most disagreeable to relate. To any female of respectability, who would study for domestic comfort, and who is willing to confide her future happiness to one in every way qualified to render the marriage state desirable, as the Advertiser is in affluence; many happy marriages have taken place through means



similar to this now resorted to. It is hoped none will answer through impertinent curiosity; but should this meet the eye of any agreeable Lady who feels desirous of meeting with a sociable, tender, kind, and sympathising companion, she will find this advertisement worthy of notice. Honour and secrecy may be depended upon. As some little security against idle application, it is requested that letters may be addressed (post paid) A.Z., care of Mr Foster, stationer, 68, Leadenhall-street, with *real* name and address, which will meet with most respectful attention."

The following curious conversation in reference to his marriage is related to have taken place after his conviction.

Attendant: Pray, Mr Corder, may I ask whether it is true that it was by advertisement that you were first introduced to Mrs Corder?—Corder: It is perfectly true.

Did you receive any answers to it?—I received no less than forty-five answers, and some of them from ladies in their carriages.

Really! well, that surprises me.—It may well surprise you, as it did myself, but I missed of a good—

Pray how was that?—I will tell you. In one of the answers which I received, it was requested that I should attend a particular church on an appointed day, dressed in a particular way, and I should there meet a lady wearing a certain dress, and both understanding what we came about, no further introduction would be necessary.

But how could you know the particular lady, as there might be another lady dressed in the same way?—Oh, to guard against any mistake, the lady desired that I should wear a black handkerchief, and have my left arm in a sling; and in case I should not observe her, she would discover me and introduce herself.

And did you meet her?—I did not ; I went to the church, but not in time, as the service was over when I got there.

Then as you did not meet her, how could you tell that she was a respectable woman?—Because the pew-opener told me that such a lady was inquiring for a gentleman of my description, and that she had come in an elegant carriage, and was a young woman of fortune. [Here the prisoner sighed heavily.]

Then you never saw her afterwards?—No, never ; but I found out where she lived, and who she was ; and would have had an interview with her, were it not that I was introduced to Mrs Corder, and we never parted until we were married.

Pray, sir, was that long?—About a week.

We have reason to believe that this last assertion, like many of those made by the wretched man, was totally untrue ; and that in reality he had been introduced to Mrs Corder at a sea-port town, in the course of the summer before the marriage. They afterwards met at the shop of a pastrycook in Fleet-street, and subsequently, singularly enough, the young lady having answered the advertisement, her next meeting with her future husband took place at the same shop. Mrs Corder whose maiden name was Moore, previously to her marriage kept a school in the neighbourhood of Gray's-inn-lane, and was very respectably connected.

## WILLIAM BURKE

### EXECUTED FOR MURDER

THE unparalleled atrocities of which this diabolical murderer was guilty, with his associates, can scarcely ever be obliterated from the recollection of man. Devoid of all sense of humanity,—a butcher of the human race, he was guilty of almost innumerable murders, for which his only reward was to be the miserable amount to be paid him for the bodies of his victims, in order that they might be submitted to the knife of the anatomist.

The scene of these horrible occurrences was Edinburgh; but notwithstanding the publication of the details of the circumstances attending them which appeared at the investigations which took place before the sheriff, few could be found who had formed such an idea of the baseness of human nature, as to believe the possibility of the truth of the dreadful disclosures which were made. The traffic in human blood, with such an object as we have already pointed out, appeared too fearful a crime to be contemplated; and all suspended their judgment until the issue of the solemn inquiry of a jury should decide upon the allegations which were made. Upon that inquisition, however, the most dreadful apprehensions which were entertained as to the result were fully realised, and the reports which had been circulated with reference to the offences charged against the prisoners, were amply proved to be well founded.



The metropolis of Scotland had been long and frequently excited by statements being made of the disappearance of persons in the lower orders of life, who were suddenly missed, and of whom no subsequent traces could be discovered. Tramps entering the city with their friends were suddenly lost; Irish hay-makers, on their road to the agricultural districts of the Lowlands, in the same manner seemed to vanish from among their companions; and in one instance an idiot, who in Scotland is always looked upon as a harmless playmate for the children, as a welcome guest at every table, and as an object of universal pity, was on a sudden lost from the favourite haunts of his imbecile wanderings. Suspicions of a dreadful character entered the minds of persons, whose duty it was to superintend the police of the town,—suspicions of murder, which might well be supposed to have been excited by the influence of the Almighty, and through which the guilty were eventually discovered and brought to punishment.

The occurrence which immediately led to the disclosure of these diabolical crimes was the unaccountable disappearance of a mendicant named Mary Campbell, an Irishwoman, who, after having been seen frequenting the same vicinity for a considerable time, towards the end of October, 1829, was suddenly missed. The poor woman happened to have friends, who were not disposed to treat her loss lightly, and a rigid inquiry by the police was the result. An idea was suggested that her body might be found at some of the medical schools in Edinburgh, so justly celebrated for the excellence of the anatomical instruction which they afforded to the pupils; and one day's search testified the truth of the fears which had been excited of her death. Her remains were discovered at the dissecting-room of Dr Knox, a distinguished anato-

mist, bearing marks perfectly conclusive of their identity. The poor woman had received a wound upon her ankle, from the kick of a drunken man, the aspect of which was sufficiently well known to enable her former companions to speak with certainty as to the body. The cause of death was now the subject of investigation; and here the deficiency of caution in the purchase of subjects, the necessity of a change in the law with regard to the provision of bodies for dissection, and finally, the certainty of the murder of the deceased, were exemplified. The medical men, by whom the body was examined, gave their firm and decided opinion that suffocation had been the means by which the deceased had been deprived of life,—a means which it was exceedingly unlikely any natural circumstances would have produced. It was evident, therefore, that murder had been resorted to—it was believed, with a view to secure the body of the wretched woman, in order that it might be sold for dissection.

The next inquiry which followed, was that as to the individual from whom the subject had been purchased. The law at that time contained no enactment with regard to the mode by which surgeons were to be provided with those subjects which the study of anatomy, so important to the human race, positively required that they should possess. The occasional execution of a criminal, whose remains were ordered by the terms of his sentence to be given over to the surgeons for dissection, afforded no sufficient supply to meet the constant demand which existed; and the stealing of dead bodies was a practice openly encouraged by the professors of anatomy, although it excited universal disgust and hatred amongst those whose immediate interests forbade their looking upon the custom with any feelings but those of horror.

So long as the war continued, the period of time required for the completion of the education of medical students, so as to fit them in some measure for the army or navy, was very short, and the study of anatomy was consequently so much neglected, that it frequently happened that a student filled the office of assistant-surgeon in those services who had never dissected an entire body. At that time the dissecting-rooms were supplied by men who in general exhumated the bodies; and, as the suspicion of the public was not excited, it was attended with no great difficulty. The highest price then ever obtained by these men was four guineas for each subject; but as the number of medical men increased, and many gentlemen, who had been engaged in the army and navy during the war, returned to complete their education, the demand became greater, and consequently the risk of procuring subjects by the usual means was proportionately augmented. The men were frequently detected in their attempts, and punished severely; they therefore demanded an advance in their remuneration; and in consequence of no legal provision being made for supplying the schools, it was found necessary to accede to the demands. The price then became eight guineas; and it subsequently varied from that to sixteen guineas, according to circumstances.

On account of this greatly increased amount obtained for subjects, numbers of persons now engaged in the traffic, and the consequence was more frequent detection. Every means which ingenuity could suggest was put in practice to obtain bodies which had not been buried; and for this purpose, the men, when they heard of the body of a person being found (drowned for instance), and which was lying to be owned, trumped up a story of an unfortunate brother or sister, humbugged a



coroner's jury (who, by the by, were more than once so well imposed on as to make a subscription, to enable the supposed brother to bury his relative), and thus obtained possession of the body. In this sort of trickery the wives of the men were often employed, as their application was attended with less suspicion, and it was never difficult to impose on the parochial officers, who were always anxious to avoid the expense of burying the deceased. Subjects were thus occasionally procured, but they were much more frequently obtained by pretending relationship to persons dying without friends in hospitals and workhouses. As, of course, the bodies thus obtained were much fresher than those which had been buried, they produced generally (independent of the teeth), as much as twelve guineas each.

But the poor and friendless were not the only sufferers from this system; persons moving in a higher sphere of society have often suffered the loss of their friends, when they were confident in security. What will the wealthy not feel, when they are told that the very men employed to solder down the leaden coffin of a child have abstracted the body, and carried it off, without exciting the slightest suspicion, in the baskets with their tools?

- Yet, notwithstanding all these means of procuring subjects, the difficulties were occasionally so great, that students from the country have been obliged to wait for months without being able to study anatomy practically; at the same time having to live at an expense they could ill afford, in London. In Scotland, at one time, to the great honour of the labouring classes, no such persons as resurrection-men could be procured for any remuneration, and it was then necessary for the students to exhumate bodies for themselves. Indeed, for a long time, this, in many parts of that

country, was the constant practice ; but, from the great horror with which the Scotch in particular regard the violation of the tomb, these attempts were always attended with considerable danger ; and very frequently the graves were guarded with so much diligence, that the carrying off a body was totally impracticable. Instances indeed occurred, where the parties engaged in such an enterprise were fired upon by persons employed to watch, whom they had not observed ; and, in one case with which the writer is acquainted, the life of one of the parties was sacrificed.

The surgeons from their anxiety to obtain subjects, and from the acknowledged illegality of the proceedings, were frequently not over-nice or minute in their inquiries as to the cause of death, or the means by which the body offered to them was obtained. The impossibility of obtaining any answer the truth of which could be relied on, and the independence of the " resurrection-men," who were always sure of a market, may be reckoned as almost sufficient excuses for this lax mode of proceeding ; and it is just to believe, that no suspicion can ever have entered the imagination of the anatomists, that unfair means had been resorted to, to take away the life of the subjects offered to them, merely with a view to their bodies being submitted to their dissection. To such causes may be ascribed the non-discovery of the suspicious cause of death of the numerous miserable victims whom investigation proves to have been murdered.

In this case, happily, the frequency of the visits of the supposed *resurrectionist* or body-stealer to the same museum enabled the police to discover his haunts, together with the circumstances attending the disappearance of the deceased, which were sufficient to afford convincing proof of her murder at his hands. Paterson, the porter to Dr Knox's

museum, was well acquainted with the persons of Burke and a man named Hare, by whom this subject had been sold, and he related the circumstances attending its purchase to the police serjeant, by whom the investigation was carried on, in such a manner, as at once secured their apprehension. He said that on the 31st of October, Burke and Hare called at the dissecting-rooms, and said that they had got something for the doctor, at the house occupied by the former. Paterson had before visited this place on similar occasions, and was well acquainted with its position, and on the next morning he went to the house in Tanner's-close, where he was told the body lay. He found there Mrs M'Dougal, who passed as the wife of Burke, and Mrs Margaret Laird, who stood in the same relation with regard to Hare. Upon his entrance, Burke pointed to a heap of straw under the table, signifying that the body was there ; and the witness gave them 5*l* to be divided between the two men, 3*l* more being agreed to be paid, if the subject should turn out to be such as was desired. The men divided the money, and promised to carry home the body on the same night to the museum. It arrived, packed in a tea-chest, and at the time of the visit of the police, which was on the following day, (the 2nd of November,) it had not been looked at. Upon the chest being opened, appearances presented themselves which induced Paterson to believe that the body had never been buried ; the face was livid, and blood was running from the nostrils and mouth ; and, as we have already said, subsequent examination proved that death had been caused by suffocation.

Coincident with the discovery of this evidence, the voluntary testimony of two other witnesses was obtained, which afforded conclusive proof of the violent means resorted to by Burke and Hare,



to procure the death of the deceased. Mr and Mrs Gray, poor persons, who were travelling through Edinburgh, informed the police, on the same day, of occurrences which they had witnessed on the night of the 31st October, which induced the most dreadful suspicions in their minds. They stated that they had taken up their lodgings in the house occupied by Burke in the course of that day, and towards the evening they had seen Mrs Campbell go in with that person. They, however, retired to rest without holding any communication with her, as she appeared to be intoxicated ; but in the morning, they were surprised to find that she was gone. They inquired of Mrs Burke what had become of her, and she said that they had turned her out because she was impudent ; but an undefinable apprehension lurked in their minds of some wrong having been done, and seizing an opportunity they peered into Burke's room, and there, under the table, they saw marks of blood, and upon further investigation, the body of the murdered woman concealed beneath some straw. Terror-struck with the discovery, they immediately gathered up their bundles and proceeded to quit the house, but were dissuaded from their intention by Mrs Burke, who had ascertained the fact of their having made so important a discovery, who urged them to stop, " as it might be 10*l* a week to them." They, however, rushed from the place as soon as they could escape, and on the following day conveyed intelligence to the police of what they had seen.

Upon the arrival of the authorities at the Tanner's-close, they found it to be a scene well fitted for the performance of such tragedies as had been recently enacted within its limits. The close itself was narrow and dark, and contained only one house, which was situated at the bottom. Here, almost shut out from the light of heaven, lived this detest-

able murderer, letting out lodgings either by the night or otherwise, to such poor wretches as would put up with the accommodation which he could offer. The house consisted of two rooms only, one of which was occupied by Burke and his wife, while the other was devoted to his lodgers. The former contained nothing but a miserable bed, a table and some straw, still reeking with the blood of the murdered woman, while the latter was totally devoid of furniture. Fortunately for their purpose, the whole party, four in number, was assembled; and they were all immediately secured and conveyed to prison. Burke, it appeared, had carried on a pretended trade of shoemaking, and in one corner of his room was found a pile of old boots and shoes, consisting of nearly forty pairs; but the discovery also of a great number of suits of clothes, of various sizes, and bearing distinct marks of blood, afforded sufficient proof, that the murder of Mrs Campbell was not the only one which had been perpetrated within the apartment.

It would be a vain effort to attempt to convey even a faint idea of the universal horror excited by these dreadful discoveries, and the fearful execration heaped upon the heads of the diabolical assassins. Even the surgeons, who were looked upon as the supporters and the indirect instigators of the murders, shared with the prisoners the effects of the strong public sensation which existed; and in several places throughout the empire—for, the system being the same everywhere, the indignation of the people was not confined to Edinburgh—attempts were made to destroy the dissecting-schools. In this, however, and in the obloquy cast upon the gentlemen of this profession, it must be said that they suffered unjustly. They were the victims, as well as the public, under a defective system of legislation; and the insufficiency of the

law was to be blamed, and not those whose absolute necessity compelled them to adopt measures, of themselves illegal, but excusable, considering the advantages to be derived from them to society, and the utter neglect of the efforts which they had made, to secure such provisions by the legislature as should enable them to proceed in a manner becoming the high and honourable station which they filled.

The examinations of the prisoners before the magistrates of Edinburgh served only to bring to light fresh atrocities and to excite fresh horror ; and eventually the whole of the prisoners were committed for trial, the evidence being clear and conclusive as to the implication of the men, although that which affected the women left great doubts as to the possibility of their conviction being secured.

During the period which elapsed subsequently to their committal, and preparatory to their trial, Hare, with a degree of villainy excelling that of his fellow in guilt, offered to make disclosures upon the subject of the system which had been carried on, upon condition of his own indemnification from punishment, and that of his wife. Mrs Laird, it had been discovered, was the least guilty of the whole party, and so far as her discharge was concerned but little difficulty was experienced ; but upon the question of the other terms desired by Hare to be imposed in reference to his own case, considerable doubt was entertained. Long and frequent consultations were held by the magistrates upon the subject, in which the probabilities of the conviction of these associates in villainy were most anxiously weighed ; and it was at length determined that, for the sake of that justice which imperatively demanded the most satisfactory and complete evidence of the guilt of one at least of the gang, the offer should be accepted. The prisoner



then made a statement to the officers of the jail, which was reduced to writing, but which, from causes too obvious to need repetition here, was not published in full. That portion of it which immediately affected the case of Burke and Mrs M'Dougal came out upon the trial; but many particulars with regard to the system which had been carried on were most properly concealed from the public knowledge.

On the 23rd December in the same year, the two prisoners, William Burke and Helen M'Dougal, were put upon their trial before the High Court of Justiciary at Edinburgh. The indictment charged against them several murders, founded upon the communications made by Hare; but, after much discussion on the part of the counsel for the Crown, and on behalf of the prisoners, it was determined that that part only of the indictment which alleged them to have murdered Mary Campbell should be proceeded with, inasmuch as that the disclosure of any of the particulars of one murder in the course of a trial for another would materially prejudice the minds of the jury against the persons charged. The murder of Mrs Campbell was alleged to have been committed by suffocation.

The preliminary witnesses produced a plan of the house of the prisoners in Tanner's-close, and proved the identity of the remains found at the house of Dr Knox.

William Noble, the shopman to Mr Rayner, a grocer at Portsburgh, near Tanner's-close, was then examined, and he proved, that on the night of the 31st October Burke, who had been in the habit of dealing at his employer's house, called there in order to purchase some trifling articles of grocery. While he was standing at the counter, Mrs Campbell entered the shop, and begged for charity. She said that she had come to Edinburgh to search for

her son, a boy of eleven years old, but that she had been unable to find him, and that she was now quite destitute. Burke inquired her name, and on her mentioning the name of Campbell he at once claimed acquaintance and relationship with her, and finally took her away with him, saying that he would provide her with lodging for the night. The woman at this time was sober. The witness added that on the following day, Burke called again and purchased an old tea-chest, and Mrs Hare, whom he knew, as well as her husband and Mrs M'Dougal, carried it away about half-an-hour afterwards.

Mrs Ann Black and Hugh Alison gave evidence tracing Mrs Campbell to Burke's house, and as to the occurrences of the dreadful night of her death. The former said that she was a lodger of Burke's ; and upon going home on the night of the 31st of October, she saw Mrs Campbell sitting in Burke's room by the fire. She was ill-clad, and was eating porridge ; and in answer to a question which the witness put, Mrs M'Dougal said that she was a Highland woman, a friend of her husband's, and that she had been assisting them in washing. The witness then quitted the room ; but subsequently, in passing through it after dark, she saw that Mrs Campbell was much intoxicated. Hare and his wife were then there, and had brought in some spirits with them, and they were all merry, and laughing and singing together. The witness afterwards heard dancing, and on looking into the room, she saw that it was Mrs M'Dougal, Hare, and Mrs Campbell. Between ten and eleven o'clock she heard a disturbance, as if Burke and Hare were fighting, and a woman screaming, but she took no notice of it, as such occurrences were frequent with her landlord's friends. In the morning she inquired of Mrs M'Dougal where Mrs Campbell was, and she told her, that she and her husband (Burke) had got

too friendly, and that she had kicked her out of the house. Alison, the witness, corroborated the evidence of Mrs Black, as to the disturbance which occurred in the house of Burke at about the hour mentioned, and which he had heard in his residence at one of the upper flats of a house nearly adjoining, but he had distinguished screams of agony, and cries for help, succeeded by a noise as if some person had been strangling or suffocating. He afterwards heard the voices of two men in conversation in the close, whom he had taken to be Burke and Hare.

Mr and Mrs Gray, whose names we have already mentioned, were also examined upon the same point, and having proved the presence of Mrs Campbell in Burke's house at the time of their arrival, they stated that Mrs M'Dougal had told them in the morning, that she had turned out the deceased because she was impudent. They, however, watched their opportunity, and slipping into the room unseen, discovered her body concealed among the straw under the table.

Other confirmatory evidence was also given upon the same subject ; and David Paterson, the porter at Dr Knox's, having detailed his account of the transaction of the purchase of the body in the manner in which we have already described it, and of its arrival in a tea-chest ; and other witnesses having proved that they saw the prisoner (Burke) and Hare carrying a tea-chest in the direction of Dr Knox's, but in such a line of street as clearly showed their object to be to escape observation, William Hare, the approver, was called.

Lord Meadowbank, a learned and very distinguished judge, presided upon this occasion, and with the most humane feelings, he earnestly cautioned this witness to give his evidence with truth. The fellow, whose appearance in the witness-box excited great interest and indignation, sullenly answered,



that he intended to do so, but that he only came there as a witness in the case of the "old woman," as he emphatically described the deceased Mrs Campbell, as distinguished, doubtless, from other miserable victims; and his examination then proceeded. We shall give his evidence as nearly as we can in the terms in which it was delivered by him in the witness-box. Having been sworn in the common form, he said he was a native of Ireland, and had resided in Scotland ten years. He had been acquainted with Burke about twelve months. M'Dougal lived with Burke as his wife; witness lived in the West Port, not far from Burke; he was in a public-house in the West Port on the forenoon of the 31st of October, when Burke came in, and they had a gill; he asked witness to go down to his house, to see the "shot" he had got to take to the doctor's; he said he had taken an old woman off the street, and wished witness to go down and see her, and see what they were doing. He understood by the word "shot," that he was going to murder the woman. He went to Burke's house, and found there was a strange man and woman (their name was Gray), the old woman, and Helen M'Dougal; the old woman was washing her short-gown; it was white and red striped. [Identified the bed-gown.] Witness remained in the house about five minutes, and then went home. Between eight and nine on the same night he was at the house of a man named Connaway with his wife; and Burke, Mrs M'Dougal, the old woman Campbell, and a lad named Broggan, Mrs M'Dougal's nephew, came in. Liquor was introduced, and after a while, Burke and Broggan went away. Witness remained some time longer, but then he also quitted the house, and went to Tanner's-close. There had been some dancing at Connaway's; and at this time he had no idea that any harm was to be done to the old woman on

that night. Soon after he arrived at Tanner's-close, Burke, M'Dougal and Mrs Campbell also came in, the latter being so much the worse for liquor as scarcely to be able to keep her feet. A quarrel arose between him and Burke (which was evidently got up for the purpose of murdering the old woman in the confusion which would be the result of it), upon the subject of his being in the house, Burke declaring that he had no business there, while he asserted that he had been invited by Mrs M'Dougal. They began to fight, and Mrs Campbell appeared alarmed and called police and murder. She ran into the passage twice, but was brought back each time by Mrs M'Dougal; and upon her re-entering the room the second time, witness intentionally pushed her over a stool upon the floor. She got up so as to rest upon her elbow, but was so drunk as not to be able to regain her feet; she called on Burke to quit fighting, and he did so; but then having stood for some minutes on the floor, Burke stood stride-legs over her, and laid himself down above her—his breast being on her head. She gave a cry, and then moaned a little; he put one hand on her nose and mouth, and the other under her chin, and stopped her breathing; this was continued for ten or fifteen minutes; he never spoke while this was going on; after he had risen from above her he put his arm upon her mouth for some minutes; she appeared quite dead; witness was sitting all the while on a chair. When he saw the woman was dead, he stripped the body of the clothes, put it into a corner, doubling it up, and covering it with straw; witness's wife and M'Dougal, when they heard the first screech of the old woman, ran into the passage, and did not come in again until the body was covered with straw; before this they were lying in the bed; and witness sat at the head of the bed; did not observe blood on the floor, nor on the woman's face

at the time ; did not observe the woman in the passage cry—but nobody came to the door during the time. Burke had not been above the woman more than a minute or two, when the woman started out of bed and ran to the door ; he saw none of them attempting to save or assist the old woman, and such could not have happened without his seeing it. When it was all over the woman came in again, and then Burke went out ; the woman asked no questions, nor did they make any remark, but they went to bed again without a word being exchanged. When Burke returned, he brought with him the man from Dr Knox's (Paterson), and he looked at the body ; he said it would do well enough, and they were to get a box and put it in, in order to carry it to his master's house. At this time the women were in bed, but he could not tell whether they were awake or not, and he soon afterwards fell asleep himself. He was rather the worse for liquor, but he knew well enough what he was about. He awoke about seven o'clock in the morning ; he found himself on a chair, with his head on the bed ; the women were in the bed, and John Broggan was lying beyond his aunt ; Burke was at the fireside. He and his wife got up and went home. In the course of the day, Burke called on him, and asked him to assist him in procuring a box. They went first to Surgeons'-square, where Dr Knox's school was situated, but failed in obtaining one there ; and then Burke went and purchased a tea-chest at the grocer's. M'Culloch, a porter, took the box home, and witness arrived there with him before Burke came in. They were standing at the door when he came ; and he asked whether they had put up the body. He answered that they had not ; and Burke then remarked that they were worth little if they had not done that. They, however, went directly in ; and witness and M'Culloch



assisted in placing the body in the chest, the latter forcing it down in its place. M'Culloch also, on seeing some of the woman's hair hanging out, pushed it into the box, remarking that it would be "a fine thing to have that seen!" The chest was corded; and M'Culloch was instructed to carry it to Surgeons'-square, witness and Burke accompanying him. On their way they met Mrs M'Dougal and his (witness's) wife, in the High School Yard, and they all went together. Having delivered the chest to Paterson, it was placed in a cellar, and the latter then went with them to Dr Knox at Newington, where he and Burke were paid *2l 7s 6d* each, *5s* being given to the porter.

The witness was cross-examined by Mr Cockburn on behalf of the prisoners, when he admitted that he had followed many businesses, both in Ireland and in Scotland. He had been frequently concerned in supplying medical schools with subjects, but had never assisted in raising any bodies from church-yards. He had often seen bodies carried to the houses of medical lecturers, but declined to say how often; he also declined to say whether he had been concerned in the murder of any other person but the old woman, and whether he had been present at any other murder in the course of the same month of October.

Mrs Laird, the wife of this witness, gave evidence very similar to that of her husband, corroborating his statements as to so many of the transactions which he had described as had fallen within her knowledge and observation.

This completed the case for the prosecution, and a most humane and able address having been delivered to the jury by Lord Meadowbank, at half-past eight in the evening they retired to consider their verdict. During the period of their absence, which extended to fifty minutes, the most breathless

anxiety was exhibited as to the result of the trial, and upon their re-entering the court, an eager silence prevailed amongst the persons assembled. The verdict consigned Burke to an ignominious fate by a declaration of his guilt; but the jury, contrary to all expectation, declared, that as to Mrs M'Dougal, the offence alleged was "not proven," a finding which relieved her from all immediate consequences upon the indictment.

Lord Meadowbank immediately passed the sentence of death upon Burke, and ordered him to be hanged on the 28th January, 1830, and his body to be delivered over to the surgeons for dissection.

He and his fellow-prisoner, M'Dougal, were then immediately conveyed to the lock-up house attached to the court, where they met Hare and his wife, who, although they had been examined as witnesses, were detained to answer any charge which might be preferred against them. Hare, on his way to this place from the court, had been seized with a sudden fit of fiendish and malignant exultation at his own supposed escape from punishment, and at the success of his schemes to bring the neck of his fellow-murderers into the noose, which had not ceased when Burke and M'Dougal were introduced. His spirits somewhat fell, however, when he learned that he was to be conveyed to Carlton-hill jail, with his wife, to await the result of the deliberations of the legal authorities, as to his prosecution upon certain charges of murder, of which there was no doubt he had been guilty, and upon his entrance to that prison the most direful forebodings appeared to fill his mind with apprehension. His wife was a fitting comrade for such a husband. While giving her evidence she had in her arms a child, ill of whooping-cough, and altogether the picture of abject misery, wretchedness, and disease; but instead of treating it with that maternal tenderness which even the

tigress shows for her young, she seemed to regard it with aversion and hatred, shaking and squeezing it, whenever the cough seized it, with the expression of a fury in her countenance.

On the succeeding Friday, Mrs M'Dougal, who had been allowed to remain so long in custody from motives of humanity only, fears being entertained that if she were to go at large, her life would be sacrificed to the vengeance of the mob, was discharged, and forthwith proceeded to her old abode, the scene of so many horrible transactions. On the next day she ventured out to a neighbouring liquor-shop to purchase whiskey, but she was instantly recognised—the spirit was refused her, and the mob gaining intelligence as to who she was, she was compelled to fly for her life. Fortunately for her, the police interfered, and conducted her again to the prison, thereby saving her from violence; but there can be little doubt that, but for this fortunate intervention in her behalf, she would have fallen a victim to the vengeance of the justly indignant populace.

In the meantime Burke had become scarcely less communicative than Hare had previously been. He made no denial of the truth of the statements which had been made by that wretch, and confirmed the horrid tale related by him, by declaring that he had sold as many as thirty or forty subjects to the surgeons, although he subsequently admitted, like his companion, that he had never once been concerned as a resurrectionist; a confession from which nothing could be inferred but that he had been a party to as many murders as he had sold dead bodies. Nor was this declaration, horrible as it was, without corroboration. The appearances of the den which he inhabited—its loneliness marking it as a fit stage for the enactment of such tragedies; the various



articles found in it; the frequent disappearance of persons of the lower orders, and of women of an unfortunate class, for whom, abandoned as they were by the friends and relations whom they had dishonoured, and excluded from all notice and regard by the virtuous part of the community, no person cared to inquire; were circumstances, all of which tended to impress the public mind with a firm belief of the truth of the dreadful suspicions which were raised by the prisoner's unsatisfactory but most frightful admissions.

The conclusion to which these circumstances lead is as obvious as it is appalling; and to strengthen it we shall here introduce a statement which was published at the time, and which may be relied on. About six months previously to these transactions, the body of a female was offered for sale by some miscreants, probably of Burke's gang, to the assistant of a most respectable teacher of anatomy in Edinburgh. The ruffians offering it were not known to him, and were not resurrection-men; but as a subject was required, he said he would take it if it suited him when he examined it, and asked when they could bring the body. They replied that they had it now, and that they would bring it to the dissecting-room in the evening, between nine and ten o'clock. At the appointed hour, accordingly, they made their appearance, accompanied by a porter, with the body in a sack. It was taken in, of course, and turned out of the sack, when it proved to be the body of a female, as had been stated by the ruffians—a woman of the town in her clothes, and with her shoes and stockings on. The assistant was startled, and proceeded at once to examine the body, when he found an enormous fracture in the back part of the head, and a large portion of the skull driven in, as if by a blow from the blunt part of a hatchet, or some such weapon. On making this

discovery, he instantly exclaimed, " You villains, where and how did you get this body ? " To which one replied, with great apparent *sang-froid*, that it was the body of a woman who had been " popped in a row (murdered in a brawl) in Halkerston's Wynd," and that if he did not choose to take it another would. The assistant then suggested that they should wait till he sent for his principal, his intention being to have them detained ; but not relishing this proposal, the ruffians (three in number, besides the porter) immediately withdrew with their horrid cargo, and, doubtless, soon found a less scrupulous purchaser. Statements of a similar character were subsequently made in many of the Scotch journals, and there appears to be too good reason to suppose that they were perfectly true.

When we consider this most singular and atrocious conspiracy, and the characters of the different actors in it, as we understand them to be, it should seem as if each of them had his allotted part in the bloody drama. Hare was a rude ruffian, with all the outward appearances of his nature—drunken, ferocious, and profligate ; and far likelier to repel than to ensnare any one by a specious show, which he was quite incapable of putting on. He appears, however, to have over-reached his associate, Burke, whom he succeeded in always thrusting forward, with a view, we have no doubt, of turning short upon him, as he did at the last, and consigning him to the gallows, when this should be necessary, in order to save himself. Burke was, indeed, the only one of the two qualified to manage the out-door business of the co-partnery ; and he it was, accordingly, who always went out to prowl for victims, and to decoy them to their destruction. In his outward manners he was entirely the reverse of Hare. He was, as we learn from good authority, quiet in his demeanour : he was never riotous ; was never

heard cursing and swearing; and even when he was the worse for drink, he walked so quietly into his own house, that his foot was never heard along the passage. He was of a fawning address, and was so well liked by the children in the neighbourhood, that each was more ready than another to do his errands. The riots which often occurred in the house, and in which Hare always bore a conspicuous part, were, there is no doubt, got up on purpose, either when they were in the act of committing murder, or that the neighbours might not be alarmed at the noise which inevitably accompanied the mortal struggle between them and the unhappy inmates whom they had enticed into their dwelling.

We have already mentioned the full statements made by Hare, as to the horrid traffic in which he had been engaged, which were not published in the form in which they fell from the lips of this diabolical ruffian. Some portions of them, however, escaped, and found their way into the public papers; and regretting our inability to lay before our readers the whole of the history of this terrible case, we shall present to them so much of his story as we have been able to learn:—

The first murder which he charged against Burke, although it is surmised that several had been committed before that time, was that of a girl named Paterson, who was about eighteen or twenty years of age. It appears, that this girl, with one of her associates, Janet Brown, had been lodged in the Canongate police-office, on Tuesday night, the 8th of April. They were kept till six o'clock the next morning, when they went to the house of one Swanstoun, to procure spirits. Here they were met by Burke, who asked them to drink. He afterwards prevailed on them to go with him to breakfast, and gave them two bottles of spirits to carry along with



them. They accompanied him to his brother Constantine Burke's house, in the Canongate. This man was a scavenger, and went out at his usual hour to work. After they had been in the house for some time, Burke and his wife began to quarrel and to fight, which seems to have been the usual preliminary to mischief. In the midst of this uproar, Hare, who had been sent for, and who was a principal agent in this scene of villainy, entered, and in the meantime Janet Brown, agitated seemingly, and alarmed by the appearance of violence, wished to leave the house, and to take her companion along with her. By this time it was about ten o'clock, and Paterson was asleep in one of the beds, totally unconscious of her approaching fate. The other girl went out, and was absent about twenty minutes. When she returned she asked for Paterson, and was told that she had left the house. She came back in the afternoon in search of her, and received the same answer. By this time she was murdered. Burke had availed himself of the short interval of twenty minutes, during which her companion, Janet Brown, was absent, to execute his horrid purpose, when she was asleep, by stopping her breath; and that very afternoon, between five and six o'clock, her body was taken to the dissecting-room and disposed of for eight pounds. The appearance of this body, which was quite fresh—which had not even begun to grow stiff—of which the face was settled and pleasant, without any expression of pain—awakened suspicions; and Burke was closely questioned as to where he procured it. He easily framed some plausible excuse that he had purchased it from the house where she died; which silenced all further suspicion.

We have already alluded to the murder of an idiot. His name was James Wilson; but he was more commonly known by the appellation of "Daft

Jamie." The circumstances attending his assassination were even, if possible, more revolting than those of the women Campbell and Paterson. The appearance of this creature showed at once the imbecility of his mind, and was such that he was universally regarded with a feeling of tenderness and sympathy. He was quite harmless and kind-hearted ; and was on this account generally liked, and well treated ; and there were certain houses where he was admitted as a familiar guest, and kindly entertained. It is probable that he had been for some time watched by this gang of murderers, and marked out as one that might be easily taken off without exciting suspicion. Accident unfortunately threw him in their way. He was met by Burke at nine o'clock one morning, in the beginning of October, 1828, wandering about in his usual manner in the Grass-market. He instantly accosted him in his fawning manner, and inquired of him whether he was in search of any one ; he told him he was seeking his mother, to whom, as he was a creature of kindly dispositions, he was warmly attached. The wretch at once saw that he now had him within his grasp, and instantly commenced his schemes for drawing him away to some convenient place where he might be murdered. He contrived to persuade him that he knew where his mother had gone, and would take him to the place ; and by coaxing and flattery he at length decoyed him into Hare's house. Here those monsters of iniquity, exulting over their deluded victim, began to pretend the greatest affection for him, and having procured liquor, they pressed it upon him. He at first decidedly refused, but they so far wrought upon his good nature by their assumed kindness, that they induced him to join them in their cups, and they plied him so effectually, that he was soon overpowered, and lying down on the floor, fell asleep.

Burke, who was anxiously watching his opportunity, then said to Hare, "Shall I do it now?" to which Hare replied, "He is too strong for you yet; you had better let him alone for a while." Both the ruffians seem to have been afraid of the physical strength which they knew the poor creature possessed, and of the use he would make of it, if prematurely roused. Burke accordingly waited a little, but impatient at the delay, and anxious to accomplish his object, he suddenly threw himself upon Jamie, and attempted to strangle him. Oppressed as he was with the influence of liquor, he was roused at once by this assault to a full sense of his danger; and, by a dreadful effort, he threw off Burke, and sprung to his feet, when the mortal struggle began. Jamie fought with all the fury of despair, and would have been an overmatch for either one of the ruffian assailants. Burke had actually the worst of the struggle, and was about to be overpowered, when he called out furiously to Hare to assist him. Hare rushing forward, turned the balance of the unequal conflict by tripping up Jamie's heels, and afterwards dragging him along the floor, with Burke lying above him. In the course of this contest, the unhappy object of this dreadful violence contrived to lay hold of Burke with his teeth, and to inflict on him a wound which occasioned a cancer, that would in all probability have shortened his days, even if he had escaped the vengeance of the law. None were present at this murder, which was completed before mid-day, except the two ruffians themselves; but the body was recognised in the dissecting-room by one of the students.

We have stated that the confessions of Hare were fully corroborated by the statements made by Burke subsequent to his conviction. The following conversation, which took place between him and one of the officers of the jail, sufficiently indicates



the state of his mind at this time, and the respective degrees of guilt attributable to him and to Hare :—

Before a question was put to him concerning the crimes he had been engaged in, he was solemnly reminded of the duty incumbent upon him, situated as he was, to banish from his mind every feeling of animosity towards Hare, on account of the evidence which the latter gave at the trial ; he was told, that, as a dying man, covered with guilt, and without hope, except in the infinite mercy of Almighty God, he, who stood so much in need of forgiveness, must prepare himself to seek it by forgiving from his heart all who had done him wrong ; and he was most emphatically adjured to speak the truth, and nothing but the truth, without any attempt either to palliate his own iniquities, or to implicate Hare more deeply than the facts warranted. Thus admonished, and thus warned, he answered the several interrogatories in the terms below stated ; declaring at the same time, upon the word of a dying man, that everything he should say would be true, and that he would in no respect exaggerate or extenuate anything, either from a desire to inculpate Hare, or to spare any one else.

After some conversation of a religious nature—in the course of which he stated, that while in Ireland his mind was under the influence of religious impressions, and that he was accustomed to read his Catechism and his Prayer Book, and to attend to his duties—he was asked, “ How comes it, then, that you, who, by your own account, were once under the influence of religious impressions, ever formed the idea of such dreadful atrocities, of such cold-blooded, systematic murders, as you admit you have been engaged in—how came such a conception to enter your mind ? ” To this Burke replied, that he did not exactly know ; but that, becoming addicted to drink, living in open adultery,

and associating continually with the most abandoned characters, he gradually became hardened and desperate, gave up attending chapel or any place of religious worship, shunned the face of a priest, and being constantly familiar with every species of wickedness, he at length grew indifferent as to what he did, and was ready to commit any crime.

He was then asked how long he had been engaged in this murderous traffic? To which he answered, "From Christmas, 1827, till the murder of the woman Campbell, in October last." "How many persons have you murdered, or been concerned in murdering during that time? Were they thirty in all?"—"Not so many; not so many; I assure you."—"How many?" He answered the question; but the answer was, for a reason perfectly satisfactory, reserved.

"Had you any accomplices?"—"None but Hare. We always took care, when we were going to commit murder, that no one else should be present—that no one could swear he saw the deed done. The women might suspect what we were about, but we always put them out of the way when we were going to do it. They never saw us commit any of the murders. One of the murders was done in Broggan's house, while he was out; but before he returned, the thing was finished, and the body put into a box. Broggan evidently suspected something, for he appeared much agitated, and entreated us 'to take away that box,' which we accordingly did; but he was not in any way concerned in it."

"You have already told me that you were engaged in these atrocities from Christmas, 1827, till the end of October, 1828: were you associated with Hare during all that time?"—"Yes: we began with selling to Dr —— the body of a woman

who had died a natural death in Hare's house. We got 10*l* for it. After this we began the murders, and all the rest of the bodies we sold to him were murdered."

"In what place were these murders generally committed?"—"They were mostly committed in Hare's house, which was very convenient for the purpose, as it consisted of a room and a kitchen; Daft Jamie was murdered there; the story told of this murder is incorrect. Hare began the struggle with him, and they fell and rolled together on the floor; then I went to Hare's assistance, and we at length finished him, though with much difficulty. I committed one murder in the country by myself; it was in last harvest; all the rest were done in conjunction with Hare."

"By what means were these fearful atrocities perpetrated?"—"By suffocation. We made the persons drunk, and then suffocated them by holding the nostrils and mouth, and getting on the body; sometimes I held the mouth and nose, while Hare knelt upon the body; and sometimes Hare held the mouth and nose, while I placed myself upon the body. Hare has perjured himself by what he said at the trial about the murder of Campbell; he did not sit by while I did it, as he says; he was on the body assisting me with all his might, while I held the nostrils and mouth with one hand, and choked her under the throat with the other; we sometimes used a pillow, but did not in this case."

"Now, Burke, answer me this question: were you tutored or instructed, or did you receive hints from any one, as to the mode of committing murder?"—"No, except from Hare. We often spoke about it, and we agreed that suffocation was the best way. Hare said so, and I agreed with him. We generally did it by suffocation."



“ Did you receive any encouragement to commit or persevere in committing these atrocities ? ”—

“ Yes ; we were frequently told by Paterson that he would take as many bodies as we could get for him. When we got one, he always told us to get more. There was commonly another person with him of the name of Falconer. They generally pressed us to get more bodies.”

“ To whom were the bodies so murdered sold ? ”—  
“ To Dr ———. We took the bodies to his rooms in ———, and then went to his house to receive the money for them. Sometimes he paid us himself ; sometimes we were paid by his assistants. No questions were ever asked as to the mode in which we had come by the bodies. We had nothing to do but to leave a body at the rooms, and to go and get the money.”

“ Did you ever, upon any occasion, sell a body or bodies to any other lecturer in this place ? ”—  
“ Never. We knew no other.”

“ You have been a resurrectionist (as it is called), I understand ? ” “ No, neither Hare nor myself ever got a body from a church-yard. All we sold were murdered, save the first one, which was that of the woman who died a natural death in Hare’s house. We began with that : our crimes then commenced. The victims we selected were generally elderly persons. They could be more easily disposed of than persons in the vigour of youth.”

Such were the horrible disclosures made by this man—disclosures of the truth of which there cannot be the smallest doubt. The general impression raised by Burke’s declaration was, that he had been originally the dupe of Hare, and that the latter having been before engaged in a similar traffic had driven him on, after having once enlisted him in the service, to commit atrocities of which he would not otherwise have been guilty.

With such a belief almost universally pervading society, it may well be imagined that a notification which was given that no prosecution would take place against Hare was received with no small degree of surprise. A cry that he, like Burke, should be subjected to the punishment due to his crimes, was raised, but was met by a positive refusal on the part of the public prosecutor to permit any proceedings to be taken against him of a criminal nature. Great excitement was created by this determination being made known, but its propriety must be now, as indeed it was then upon mature consideration, admitted. No one, we believe, will deny that immense advantages would have been derived by society from the visitation of condign punishment upon every one of the wretches, male and female, who had disgraced the human form, by aiding and abetting the perpetration of these unheard-of atrocities; but it was felt that care must be taken that in the anxiety which existed to visit the gui'ty with the reward of their criminal acts, the great landmarks of conservative law were not overthrown. Whatever the terms were upon which the evidence of Hare was obtained, it behoved the public authorities of the country to act upon them to their fullest extent; and although probably, according to the strict rule, he would have been liable to be brought to trial upon any one of those murders in which he had been engaged, except that of Mrs Campbell, the expediency of such a proceeding may well be doubted. His arraignment for any offence, without the certainty of his conviction, might have been to place the authorities in a position, in which they would have been triumphed over by this ruffian. Who, we ask, could have been produced as a witness to fix any crime upon him? His own confession was taken for another purpose, and was a privileged

communication which could not be produced in evidence against him;—that of Burke would be equally useless, for before any trial could take place, he would be a “hanged man,” and his statement being *ex parte*, could not legally be laid before the jury. Mrs M’Dougal, burning with vengeance for the loss of her paramour, would be so prejudiced as to render her testimony impossible to be believed, and Mrs Hare could not be examined as a witness against her own husband. The other witnesses on the trial had deposed to facts and circumstances which were in themselves vague and uncertain when stripped of the admissions, positive and negative, of Hare and Burke, which alone served to flash upon them the light of truth in a horrid and appalling glare, but which, as we have already said, could not be used in any new inquiry. If a new investigation had commenced in which Hare was the person charged, the peace of the community might have been disturbed. Great excitement would undoubtedly have been created, and it was deemed impolitic for the sake of the character of the nation, when a conviction was uncertain, to expose a wretch like this prisoner to popular outrage. Edinburgh had already had her share of those commotions, in which the people had snatched victims from the protection of the law, and wanted no other sacrifice; and however all men would have rejoiced, if in due course of law the whole of this band of wretches could have been punished by the gibbet, all right-minded persons must have shrunk, even for such a purpose, from straining the law to sharp interpretations. Hare, therefore, it was felt, must be protected from the penal consequences of his crimes, and permitted to live a little longer. Such a wretch, however, could not have escaped with impunity. To a mind capable of reflection death would have been a comfort, compared with such a state of existence as



that to which he was doomed. With whom, now that Burke was gone, could he associate? Where could he hide his head? The brand of "murderer" was on his brow,—the finger of the Almighty was upon him, as one for whom the chance of mercy was small and uncertain.

Notwithstanding these considerations, however, frequent reports were circulated that the friends of Daft Jamie were determined to commence a prosecution against his murderer; and a petition was actually presented to the High Court of Justiciary in the name of his mother and sister, for a warrant to detain the prisoner in jail to answer the charge; but the court declined to interfere, as such a step would be unnecessary, the right of prosecution lying in the hands of the Lord Advocate, who was bound to take such steps as were proper and requisite.

In the meantime Mrs M'Dougal having been again suffered to quit the jail, succeeded in making her escape from Edinburgh unperceived. Upon the night on which she was taken to the prison for security by the police, she affected to be sensible of her condition, but assured the officers that she was herself nearly falling a victim to the horrible system in which Burke had been engaged. She then related a plausible tale of her having overheard Burke and Hare come to a determination to murder her in case of their wanting a subject. She stated, that one night Burke and Hare were carousing in one of the apartments of Hare's humble shambles on the profit of a recent murder. In the midst of their unhallowed orgies, Hare raised his hand, and in a fit of fiendish exultation, stated that they could never want money; for when they were at a loss for a "shot"—a body for dissection—they would murder and sell, first one and then the other of their own wives. Being in the adjoining apartment, the females overheard, and were petrified by this

horrible resolution, as they had every reason to believe that the monsters would certainly carry it into effect. A discussion of some length ensued, and Hare finally succeeded in persuading Burke to consent, that when the dreadful emergency did arrive, Mrs M'Dougal should be the first victim. Upon her leaving the prison she was seen to go in a direction as if she intended to quit the city of Edinburgh, and unsought, and unasked for, she was never again seen within the limits of the place which she had polluted by her presence.

On Wednesday, the 28th of January, pursuant to his sentence, Burke underwent the last penalty of the law. During the latter portion of his confinement, he declared that his confession had tended materially to relieve his mind ; and he professed great contrition for his crimes. On the day of his execution he was removed from the jail to the lock-up, at the Court-house, where the scaffold had been erected, under a strong escort of police. The crowd which had assembled to witness his final exit from the scene of life was tremendous ; and seats commanding a view of the gallows were let at a large price. Upon his coming forth upon the platform, he was assailed by the hideous yells of public execration, with a species of ferocious exultation, The concluding moments of his existence must have caused him the most acute suffering, for, stung to madness by the horrible shrieks with which he was greeted, he appeared anxious to hurry the executioner in the performance of his duty, as if desirous to escape from that life which he had spent so ill. Very soon after eight o'clock, he was tied up to the gallows in the usual way ; and he immediately gave the signal for the falling of the drop, by throwing down his handkerchief. A short, but apparently a severe struggle succeeded ; and in less than two minutes he ceased to move. His body hung



suspended for half an hour, when it was cut down, and placed in a shell, which had been brought to the scaffold for its reception. A struggle took place among the officials present for scraps of the rope with which he had been hanged, shavings of his coffin, and other relics of a similar character; but by nine o'clock, the crowd had dispersed, and in a few hours afterwards, all appearance of his execution had vanished.

The case of Hare was argued before the Scotch judges on the 5th of February; and by a majority of four to two, they determined that the public faith had been pledged to him, when his evidence was received against Burke, that he should be borne harmless, and he was ordered to be discharged. It was found, however, that by an ancient form of law he might be detained for the costs of the suit, and his final deliberation was therefore delayed; but on Thursday, the 12th of the same month, he and his wife were set at liberty. They appear upon their discharge to have parted company; for Mrs Hare was nearly sacrificed to the fury of the mob at Glasgow, to which place she wended her way, while her husband proceeded by mail to Dumfries, where he was near meeting a similar fate. The mail, it appears, landed him at about seven o'clock in the morning; and although there was no intimation of his arrival, he was recognised by the mob, who immediately assailed him with the bitterest execrations, and with stones and other missiles. He succeeded in effecting his escape from them into the King's Arms Inn, where he obtained a refuge; but a crowd of persons surrounded the house, and demanded that he should be given up to their fury. For a considerable time consequences of a dangerous nature were apprehended; but night having arrived, the people dispersed; and when all was quiet, Hare quitted the house, and made a precipitate retreat



from the town—whither, it was not known. The subsequent history of this atrocious ruffian, and of his wife and Mrs M'Dougal, must, we believe, for ever remain a mystery. Their crimes and their notoriety would be sufficient to prevent their acknowledging their names, or the fact of their being the participators in these horrible transactions; and it is to be hoped, that when they quitted the scene of their dreadful offences, they did so with sincere thankfulness to the Almighty for the escape which they had had from a sudden and ignominious death, and with a firm determination to make use of that period which was granted them to live, to atone, by their repentance, for their sins.

We cannot quit this subject without remarking upon the effects which were produced by these revolting murders. It was on the 28th of January, that Burke expiated his crimes upon the scaffold, and Parliament met on the 5th of the ensuing month of February. On the 12th of the same month, Mr Warburton gave notice of his intention of bringing the whole subject before the House of Commons. Rumours had by this time become general through the metropolis that the same system which had been carried on in Edinburgh had been discovered to exist in London; and the public, whose fears were easily alarmed by such a statement, immediately concluded that every report of a missing person confirmed that which now became a pretty general belief. The daily papers were filled with accounts of persons who had suddenly disappeared, and who were supposed to have been "burked," the term now universally employed in the description of the murders committed by the atrocious gang, whose villainies had just been brought to light; and the universal alarm which prevailed was rendered greater by the absurd practice of idle or drunken fellows who stopped persons whom they met in

lonely situations, pretending to clap a plaister over their noses and mouths, with an intention to suffocate them. Complaints were made to the police of the system of creating alarm which was carried on, and their utmost vigilance was called for to protect the public from absolute danger, as well as from the terror which was everywhere excited. Accounts were sometimes received of dead bodies having been discovered packed in brine tubs, on their way to Edinburgh from London, and every case of this description was distorted into proof of the existence of a scheme of murder in the latter place, even more dreadful than that which had been discovered in Scotland.

Owing to the long and most important discussions, which at this period were carried on in both Houses of Parliament, upon the subject of the claims of the Catholics for relief, it was not until Thursday, the 12th of March, that this subject could be brought under the attention of the legislature. Mr Warburton then moved in the House of Commons for leave to bring in a bill to legalise and regulate the supply of dead bodies for dissection. The honourable gentleman in stating to the House the general grounds upon which he made his motion, said that his first object would be, to confer a species of legality on the practice of anatomy; and with this view he should propose—first, an enactment to render anatomy lawful, both in its practice and as a mode of instruction in all cities or towns corporate wherein there were schools which conferred degrees in anatomy, or wherein there were hospitals which were capable of receiving fifty patients at a time. The next difficulty to surmount would be the obtaining a sufficient number of subjects for the purposes of science and instruction. His project had for its basis the practice of the French Government in the City of Paris. He, therefore, should

propose that the overseers of the poor, in certain cases, and the governors of hospitals, should be empowered by the bill to give up to surgical examination the bodies of such persons as fell victims to disease whilst in the hospital, and were not claimed within a certain time after their decease. Here he begged that he should not be understood to treat the feelings of the lower orders with the slightest degree of disrespect by the present enactment. He begged them to take this into their consideration, and also to reflect, that in the case of the late disclosures of the horrid atrocities committed in order to obtain a supply of subjects for dissection in Edinburgh, the lower classes had in all cases been the victims. The motion of the hon. member was fully approved of by the House, and a bill was on the same night introduced, embodying the general principles which he had detailed. The bill passed the House of Commons in the course of the same session, but upon its reaching the House of Lords, so many noble individuals were found who objected to its principle, by which, it was said, the poor were subjected to what might be considered an evil, in which the rich did not participate, that it was withdrawn.

It was not until the recurrence of events in the metropolis of London, similar in character to those which we have just described,—the murders committed by Bishop and Williams,—that the subject again received the attention of Parliament. In the session of 1831, Mr Warburton once more moved for leave to introduce a bill, the provisions of which, although they were mainly the same as those of his former measure, differed from it in some important respects. By the new bill, the consent of the party whose body was to be submitted to dissection was required to be obtained before his death, as a condition precedent to its being handed over to the



surgeons, and the whole system was to be placed under the superintending direction of inspectors and commissioners appointed for that purpose. This bill was introduced on Thursday, December 15, and after undergoing considerable discussion, it at length passed into a law in the same session.

The act after being in operation during a period of upwards of eight years, was found to have been attended with the most advantageous results, and the exertions of Dr Southwood Smith, who held a responsible situation under its provisions, tended in no small degree to secure this admirable effect. The offence of body-snatching ceased from that time to be heard of; for the object of the crime having been removed, the crime itself ceased to be committed.

Happy would it have been for the interests of the community, if, before these dreadful scenes were witnessed and brought to light, some similar plan had met the approbation of the legislature.

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